

Negotiating Gender Identities in Honduras The Contribution of Women's Radio Programs

by

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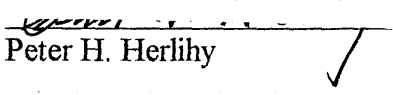
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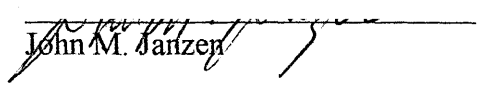
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ABSTRACT

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The analysis of mass media has captured the attention of anthropologists, particularly in the context of increased globalization and the disappearance of traditional boundaries between cultural groups. The study of mass media has contributed to understanding the processes of cultural deterritorialization. Within this context, the circulation of images of women in the mass media has helped to construct a gender identity that unites women's self representations worldwide, beyond their particular geographical space and local cultures.

Following the idea that mass media are at once cultural products and social processes, this thesis examines the content of various radio programs in Honduras. It explores how radio functions to construct, affirm, and contest social identities. Specifically, this thesis focuses on gender representations portrayed in Honduran mass media and the cultural ideology that informs their enactment. After a brief historical review of the emergence of radio and women's organizations in Honduras, I compare "traditional" and "alternative" gender images portrayed in Honduran mass media, especially on radio. I conclude that the use of radio by women's organizations is one of the various strategies used by social agents in the country to stimulate social change.

"Alternative" radio programs attempt to empower female audiences through providing information, creating a network of solidarity among its audiences, and challenging the traditional stereotypes of women and men in Honduran society.

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Introduction

This thesis analyzes the ways in which gender stereotypes were negotiated in Honduran mass media through the broadcast of women's radio programs during May-July 1998, and January, and March 1999. It examines the content of various radio programs and mass media in Honduras based on the idea that mass media are at once cultural products and social processes, as well as extremely potent arenas of political struggle (Spiltunik 1993b:303).

Following the idea that electronic mass media as popular culture function to construct or change social identities (Anderson 1991), I contend that the use of radio broadcasts by women's organizations in Honduras is one of the various strategies used by social agents in the country to stimulate social change. Through radio broadcastings women organizations attempt to empower women through providing information, creating solidarity networks among their audiences, and by challenging the traditional stereotypes of women, and men in Honduran society. This thesis studies particularly gender representations portrayed in mass media and the social ideology that sustains them. It compares "traditional" gender representations with new or "alternative" gender images proposed by women's organizations in the country.

To understand the women's general/traditional stereotypes portrayed in the mass media in Honduras I developed ethnographic content analysis (Altheide 1996; Ball and Smith 1992) of various radio programs mainly from the two most powerful radio stations in the country, *Radio América* and *HRN-La Voz de Honduras*.¹ I complemented this information with a review of newspapers, and television

¹ Currently, the two largest radio networks in Honduras are *Emisoras Unidas* (United Stations) of the Mercantile Bank's group (*BAMER*), mainly the Ferrari-Villeda family, and which main station is *HRN, La Voz de Honduras*, founded by Rafael Ferrari in 1933, and; *Audiovideo*, of the *Mandofer* group, which main radio station is *Radio America*, founded in 1949. Ferrari is considered the first who started the radio programming's interest in Honduras and who began the radio cultural movement (Moncada 1996:27).

advertisements. For the analysis of the messages promoted by women's organizations, I studied the content of women's radio programs, pamphlets and magazines, and pursued ethnographic work with the producers of the women's radio program *Tiempo de Hablar* (Time to Talk) developed by the women's organization *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres* (Center for Women Rights).

Given that radio messages are reinterpreted by their audiences in terms of their own particular social situation, I pursued research among the audiences (Curran and Liebes 1998:18; Livingstone 1998:238-239) to examine the acceptance or resistance to the new gender images portrayed by women's radio programs among men and women in Tegucigalpa. I conducted fieldwork based on interviews with the producers of the radio program *Tiempo de Hablar*. I also observed peoples' reactions to a particular episode of *Tiempo de Hablar*, and analyzed the content of 78 letters sent to the program by some of its listeners.

Throughout this thesis I distinguish between "traditional," and "alternative" gender messages and representations in the Honduran mass media. Traditional representations support the dominant historical gender patterns of Honduras, while alternative images promote new ways to portray society based on different concepts of gender relations, notions of public and private spaces, ideas of self, family, and religion. According to Spitulnik (1993b:305), the existence of alternative, independent, or decentralized media forms and practices is intricately determined in relation to the dominant, "legitimate" media in the societies where they occur. The challenge in studying alternative media forms is to situate their production, use, interpretation, and circulation within the larger context of available media forms (Spitulnik 1993b:306). I understand women's radio programs in Honduras as "alternative" media forms that function within the broader context of patriarchal society and the dominant media in the country. Alternative programs resist the dominant "traditional" gender roles and stereotypes. This thesis does not simply establish a binary opposition between

“traditional” and “alternative” programs but rather looks at the insertion of “alternative” messages into the current presumably “official” and dominant mass media.

I assess the different media through an analysis of various radio programs broadcasted in Honduras between May-July 1998 in *Radio America*, *HRN*, *La Voz de Honduras*, *Reloj*, *Satelite*, and *Esperanza* radio stations.² This information was complemented with an analysis of women’s images in newspapers, television and on the press on the Internet. My discussion of “alternative” radio programs is based on an in-depth analysis of the program “*Tiempo de Hablar*,” developed by the women’s organization *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres*.

I chose women’s alternative media as a case study because traditional women’s images portrayed in mass media reflect patriarchal notions of womanhood, which are subject to change, or are resisted by women’s groups using alternative programs. The comparison of alternative representations and traditional images thus highlights the gender contesting images in Honduran society.

Previous Research

Because cultural anthropology analyzes values, attitudes, and opinions, it provides insight into the various mass media, and advertising (Eiselein and Topper 1976; Kottak 1990). The media play powerful integrative roles in contemporary culture. The media reflect and influence the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and behavior of the target populations. Eiselein and Topper (1976:113) argue that media refers to the mechanical amplification of communication which transcend geographic and/or temporal barriers. They note that examples of media include signal drums, traffic lights, heliographic mirrors, the printed page and, the modern methods of image-signal

² Appendix 1 shows the different programs analyzed, the date recorded, their main focus and the subjects addressed in that particular day by the radio programs.

transmission.

The study of media is not restricted to industrial societies but is also important in “developing” and “peasant” societies. The revolution of the transistor radio, and its pervasiveness is felt in most places of the globe (Eiselein and Topper 1976:114).

Some scholars are concerned that modern technology, including the mass media, corrodes “traditional cultures” by homogenizing products to reach more people (Gutis 1987). Others see an important role for modern technology in enabling social groups or local cultures to express themselves and, in so doing, in disseminating particular subcultures in the marketplace of ideas. From this perspective, people are not passive victims of cultural imperialism and the media, because they constantly revise, rework, resist and reflect the messages received from external mediatic sources. Readers of media messages constantly produce their own meanings (Kottak 1994:493-506).

According to Eiselein and Topper (1976:113), media has been a troublesome and vague concept for both social scientists and communicators. Kendall et al. (1983:358) point out how the use of a linear model of communications limited the use of media and communications theory and research. These authors advocate instead a convergent model which emphasizes active communication and accommodation, the network of meaning in diverse contexts and mutual understanding. Kendall et al. found that adapting the convergent model to the ideas of ethnographic work and local culture, produces a viable model for ethnographic research.

In *Anthropology and Mass Media*, Debra Spitulnik (1993b:293) contends that there is as yet no “anthropology of mass media.” For this assumption she considers the small amount of published literature to date. However, she points out that since the late 1980s anthropologists have raised their interest in the study of mass media. Especially as anthropologists have increasingly struggled to define what falls within the legitimate realm of the study of “a culture.” In the age of globalization and the

effacement of traditional boundaries between different cultural groups, mass media have been a contributing force in the processes of cultural deterritorialization. Questions such as how do mass media represent and shape cultural values? What is their place in the formation of social relations and social identities? How do they structure people's senses of space and time? arise in the anthropological study of mass media (Spiltunik 1993: 293-294). In this thesis I follow Spiltunik's (1993b:293) definition of "mass media" as the electronic media of radio, television, film, and recorded music, and the print media of newspapers, magazines, and popular literature.

Spiltunik (1993b: 295) believes that the common approach that uses textual analysis to study mass media is incomplete without the analysis of the culture of media production, the political economy and social history of media institutions, and the various practices of media consumption that exist in any given society. The problem is how to locate the production of meaning and ideology in the mass communication process, and how to characterize processes of agency and interpretation. In the encoding-decoding model, audiences are seen as active decoders of media messages, who accept, reject, or resist what is conveyed based on their position within society. More modern approaches see audiences as negotiators, modifiers and interpreters of media messages, while others take the analysis beyond the individual communication event and the sender-receiver, to consider media forms within broader social processes and in relation to specific understandings of the communication genres that they instantiate (Spiltunik 1993b:298).

In *Culture, Power, Place: Ethnography at the End of an Era*, Gupta and Ferguson (1997:9) and Durham Peters (1997: 85-92) point out that it is not surprising that there is so little ethnographic work on the mass media. According to these authors, the mass media violate the notion that places are containers of integrated cultures. The perspectives presented by women's media, for example, surpass particular cultures, and provide elements that are common for women all over the

world. Through the various organizations that work with new gender discourse, different concepts have arisen and a common language has started to take form in many cases independently of nationality, ethnicity, and social class.

Modern media pose the question of the continuing relevance of place as a marker of intelligibility in social description (Durham Peters 1997:79). According to Durham Peters, media and mass communication seem to threaten the existence of local sites of talk. Gupta and Ferguson (1997:3) emphasize the idea of the deterritorialization of culture caused by the mass migrations and transnational culture flows of a late capitalist world. According to Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 3), there is currently a special interest in understanding how questions of identity and cultural difference are spatialized in new ways.

In the context of the deterritorialization of culture, women's "alternative" representations that transcend national, regional, and local borders have the potential to construct gender identities that might unite women's self representations beyond their particular geographical space. This is a challenging idea for women considering that conventional oppositions of local and global often involve a gendered association of the local with women and with a feminized private, domestic, or natural space. A feminized "local" appears as the "natural" basis of home and community, whereas a masculine "global" seems like an artificial intrusion on it (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:7, Massey 1994:9-10).

In spite of its concern with other dimensions of social life, the theoretical basis for the study of media has been long established in anthropology. For instance, Malinowski (1935) understood culture not just as a mere inventory of artifacts and patterns of behavior, but also as a system of symbolic constructs. Hall's (1959) suggestion that culture is communication, also influenced anthropologists to adopt a cultural "framework" for studying the media. Similarly, models of linguistic anthropology provided a basis for studying media. Anthropologists have also used the

structural-functional model to analyze media as working social systems within a culture (Eiselein and Topper 1976:115).

In *Qualitative Media Analysis*, Altheide (1996:2) describes the process of studying texts or any symbolic representation that can be recorded or retrieved for analysis. Documents or texts are studied to understand culture--or the process and the array of objects, symbols and meanings that make up social reality shared by members of a society. Document analysis refers to an integrated and conceptually informed method for locating, identifying, retrieving, and analyzing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning. Semiotics, or the study of signs focuses on the in-depth unraveling of the author's assumptions, motives, and intended consequences as revealed by analysis of the document (Altheide 1996:7).

Quantitative content analysis (QCA) has been another method used to study documents, based on positivistic assumptions of objectivity. For media specialists QCA provided a way of obtaining data to measure the frequency and extent of messages (Berelson 1966, Altheide 1996:15). This method has been used to determine the objective content of messages of written and electronic documents by collecting quantitative data about predefined and usually precoded categories or variables. Altheide's (1996:2) own approach to studying documents advocates a blend consisting on the traditional notion of objective content analysis and participant observation to form ethnographic content analysis (ECA). A major difference between ethnographic content analysis and the approaches mentioned above is the reflexive and interactive nature of the investigator, concepts, data collection, and analysis. ECA is currently used by scholars from different disciplines to study mass media (Altheide 1996, 1995; Stone 1993).

Audience centered research has been conducted by communication scholars, social psychologists, and sociologists to a greater extent than by anthropologists. However, these disciplines, as well as cultural studies, are including anthropological

insights into their perspectives. An example of this is the work of Elihu Katz (Curran and Liebes 1998:3-19) who is known as one of the founding fathers of mass communication research and who imported insights from cultural anthropology to change the understandings of the ritual role of television. The works of Alexander and Jacobs (1998) on mass communication, ritual, and civil society; Carey's (1998) political ritual on television; Liebes' (1998) television's disaster marathons; Hallin's (1998) broadcasting in the Third world, to name a few, follow Katz's approach. Many scholars are paying closer attention to studying social and cultural contexts for the understanding of the relationship between media and its audiences.

Anthropology and Radio

Anthropologists have been involved with radio since its inception. Most often, their involvement has been related to anthropologists' roles as "radio talents" or "newsmakers." Some anthropologists however, have studied radio. Examples of this include Warner and Henry's (1948) study of radio soap operas; Eiselein's study of various aspects of Anglo-American and Mexican-American radio (Eiselein 1973, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c, 1975e, 1975c, 1975d, 1975e, 1975f; Eiselein and Barber 1973; Eiselein and Wong 1973a, 1973b) (Eiselein 1976:129); Goffman's study of radio talk (Goffman 1981), Spitulnik's studies of radio programs in Zambia (Spitulnik 1992, 1993a, 1993c), and Urla's (1991) study of illegal radios and cultural resistance in the Basque country, among others.

After its invention at the end of the 19th century, radio has constantly played a relevant role in human history. In 1914 radio becomes an important instrument during the First World War for the emission of signals between the combating troops. In 1916 portable radios were invented and introduced in domestic settings for popular use. During the Second World War in Europe radio was used for propagandist and bellicose ends (Moncada 1994:14-15). However, studies about radio and its influence

among audiences have also demonstrated that since its origins radio worked to provide information and make propaganda, yet the audiences were also active in their reinterpretation of messages. As pointed out by Paul Lazarsfeld (in McLuhan 1994:297-298):

If a government monopolizes the radio, then by mere repetition and by exclusion of conflicting points of view it can determine the opinions of the population.... No inference should be drawn regarding the effects of radio as such. It is often forgotten that Hitler did not achieve control through radio but almost despite it, because at the time of his rise to power radio was controlled by his enemies. The monopolistic effects have probably less social importance than is generally assumed.

Monopoly and cultural hegemony are accompanied by resistance--the experience that constructs and reconstructs the experience of subjects, which changes subjectivities, redefines the subject-object relationship, and the manner in which the subjects come to be tied to their own identities through self-knowledge (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:19; Foucault 1991:38-40). If one of the modes of operation of power is to attach identities to subjects, to tie subjects to their own identities through self-knowledge, then, resistance serves to reshape subjects by untying or untidying that relationship (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:20). As expressed by Foucault (1991:96), "just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities." In this particular study of mass media in Honduras, study of resistance allows us to consider audiences, mass media producers and the society in general, as active participants in the continuous negotiation of identities and meaning construction.

The Popularization of Radio

As pointed out by Eiselein and Topper (1976:128) the "tribal drum" of radio entered the United States' media scene in 1920 when KDKA and 8XK began regular

broadcasting. From then on, radio was predominantly entertainment and often referred as “the poor man’s entertainment.” Educational and public radio in the United States started with the University of Wisconsin’s experimental station 9XM in 1919. Following this pattern, most of the noncommercial stations are licenced to colleges and universities and even today function as a part of universities’ extension services to the community. However, commercial monopolies are the strongest controllers of U.S. mass media.

In Honduras, radio programs emerged with the entrance of the United Fruit Company³ to the country. *La Voz del Trópico* (The Voice of the Tropics) was an experimental station and belonged to The Tropical Radio Telegraph, a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company which received a governmental concession to operate telecommunications in Honduras (Moncada 1996:17). *La Voz del Trópico* started operating in Tegucigalpa in 1921 when the government of Honduras granted Tropical Radio a 99 year radio frequency permit. Tropical Radio Telegraph ceased operating the station in 1933. The radio stations managed by Hondurans, *El Eco de Honduras* and *HRN-La Voz del Comercio*, started functioning in 1929 and 1933, respectively, beginning the popular radio production in the country (Moncada 1996:21).

Ethnographic content analyses of radio programs in Honduras has not been conducted during the past 20 years. Kendall et al. (1983) pursued a study on anthropology, communications and health in Honduras which focused on the different media used to spread a health campaign. Their study examined health media campaigns, and their effect on people’s acceptance of a product and its adaptation to people’s own cultural patterns. Juan A. Moncada (1996) developed a study of radio broadcasting in Honduras with a historical and journalistic focus. In spite of its absence in Honduras, the analysis of radio as influential in its relationship with

³ American transnational company which has exploited banana and other tropical fruits production in the Northern Coast of Honduras.

audiences and their response to radio programs has been done in other Latin American countries. Some of the most significant works in Latin America are J. Martín Barbero's (1993) studies about mass media and culture. Other works are Hernández Aguilar's (1989) semiotic analysis of radio in México; Elkin's (1992) article about the radio program *Nuestra Vida* in Huaycán, Perú; Alfaro's et al. (1990) study about a radio sentimental consultation program in Perú: "*Cultura de Masas y Cultura Popular en la Radio Peruana*;" and Huesca's (1996) ethnography of the *Reporteros populares* of Bolivia. Radio programs developed in Honduras for literacy and social projects' promotion are mentioned by Wilkins (1999) in her work about development discourse on gender and communication in strategies for social change.

The Present Study

The analysis of Honduran women's radio programs provides, in a broader context, insight into the dynamic relationship that exists between social movements and the mass media (Stone 1993:378). Assuming that mass media can be understood as artifacts, experiences, practices, and processes (Spitulnik 1993b:293), the analysis of radio programs in Honduras involves the study of Honduran society itself. Due to the isolation of most rural communities, many of which do not have electricity--the radio plays an essential role linking communities, bringing information, and entertainment to a large part of Honduran society. In Honduras, radio functions as the main form of communication with the outside world. Most people obtain information on local, regional, national and international issues through radio. Radio also transmits personal messages, delivers political propaganda, and works as an open space for expressing social-political critique and popular demands.

Radio programs contributed to heightening a socio-political consciousness in Honduras during the 1970s and the 1980s in struggles against military regimes. Furthermore, radio linked communities with similar characteristics and related

problems. For example, national liberation movements during the 1970s and 1980s used radio programs to raise political consciousness among peasants and workers against the military and the dominant economic and political system. During this time, radio programs also functioned as an instrument for the Liberation Theology⁴ leaders and other socially oriented groups such as peasant organizations, women's movements, literacy campaigns, and training programs.

Over the last decade, radio has maintained its role as a place for reflection, dialogue and consciousness raising. It has also been used by different groups to popularize socioeconomic messages related to developmental policy. Governmental, non governmental, and international organizations as well as grassroots movements are currently using radio programs to transmit their different discourses. Paradoxically radio programs and socially-concerned messages that were sometimes repressed during the previous two decades became instruments for "development" in the 1990s. This can be related to Wilkins (1999:47) idea of understanding development within the context of institutional discourse. As defined by Escobar (1995a:154), discourse is "a rule-governed system held together by a set of statements that the discursive practice continues to reproduce." "As a discourse, development articulates knowledge and power through the construction of social problems and institutional interventions" (Escobar 1995b). Social problems found in Honduras in the previous decades became part of the "development" discourse of the 1990s.

Following Spiltunik's (1993b:306) idea that the crucial challenge in studying alternative media forms is to situate their production, use, interpretation, and circulation within the larger contexts of available media forms, I analyze alternative

⁴ After the Medellín Bishops' Conference in 1968, which advocated the church's "option for the poor" (Norsworthy and Barry 1994:116), Christian Democratic and church activists in most Latin America supported peasant demands for land distribution and the improvement of rural life (Yudelman 1987:35). This tendency was interpreted by the Latin American and U.S. governments, armies and oligarchies as communist activism and was repressed during the 1970s and 1980s in most countries.

media in Honduras in relation to the larger context, which includes Honduran traditional, “legitimate” media, and Honduran society in general.

By analyzing how society’s ideas of women are portrayed in the mass media, one is able to identify primary images of gender representations in Honduran society. We can uncover the significance society assigns to gender, and begin to understand how gender influences membership in the community and family. To evaluate strategies that contest “traditional” (Hanson 1997) media in Honduras, one has to be aware of the customary ideas concerning different genders, as well as of the power relations between men and women. Alternative perspectives that contest traditional gender stereotypes in the Honduran mass media provide new ideas for social interaction, that can lead to the conceptualization of novel social models and, thus, to the “invention of tradition” (Hanson 1997) regarding gender relations.

The need for social change concerning gender relations is experienced by groups in Honduras, especially formally educated women who want to end gender inequities in the family, religion, school, and political life. Certain values promoted by Honduran society reaffirm gender inequalities. For instance, the roots of domestic violence against women are to be found, according to Fauné (1995:129-130) in the *machismo* grounded in the region’s culture. According to this perspective, violence constitutes a central component in the construction of the masculine identity, and women are also socially prepared to accept violence as part of their lives. As pointed out by Fauné (1995:132) in Honduras, rape is the main expression of family violence, and among the relatives, the father is the most frequent aggressor (37%). Violence is not only directed to women, but it also permeates power relations throughout Honduran society. Furthermore, even though the dominant patriarchal ideology in Honduras preserves the myth of men as the providers and the household supporters, the reality shows that thousands of households in the country are led by a woman (Peckenham and Street 1986:5).

Consequently, “traditional” gender roles’ representations, or images refer to the dominant--patriarchal-- social values that preserve women’s discrimination in Honduran society. I use the term “traditional” to refer to the values that preserve the mentioned above historical pattern of gender relations that treat women as subordinated to men. Opposed to those values, my use of the term “alternative” will refer to the new ways for gender relations found by women to resist and contend “traditional”--dominant-- ideas of women as subordinated.

The aim of this study is to contribute to the anthropological understanding of mass media, providing insight to ethnographic content analysis (Altheide 1996) and audience research (Curran and Liebes 1998:14), and more broadly to the fields of gender, and communication studies.

My research addresses the following questions:

- Are there gender stereotypes portrayed by the mass media in Honduras, and what is the ideology that informs them?
- Are there alternative programs that resist dominant gender stereotypes, and how do they work?
- Are women’s alternative discourses having an impact on the audience, and promoting social change?;
- How do different audiences accept or resist women’s alternative discourse?;

In the following chapters I present the results of my thesis. Chapter two outlines the methodology I followed to assess my study. Chapter three provides a historical perspective of mass media in Honduras, with a special emphasis on radio programs and women’s inclusion in mass communication. Chapter four analyzes gender representations in Honduran mass media. Chapter five addresses alternative media in Honduras with a special focus on women’s radio programs, and specifically *Tiempo de Hablar*. Chapter six presents the conclusions.

The Setting

During May-July 1998, and January, and March 1999, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in the city of Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. According to the World Bank (Casey and Paolisso 1992:6) Honduras is considered a “poor” country. With an annual population growth rate of 3%, Honduras is one of the fastest growing countries in Latin America. In 1992, the Honduran fertility rate was still 5.1 children per woman, and more than 47% of the population was less than 15 years old . As pointed out by Norsworthy and Barry (1994:109), Honduran poverty is reflected in its deteriorating state of health as is shown in Table 1.1.

According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), health conditions in Honduras are among the worst in the hemisphere (Norsworthy and Barry 1994:111). A UNICEF study determined that 25% of Honduran families suffer from protein deficiency. Infectious and parasitic diseases are the leading causes of death in Honduras. According to PAHO statistics, Honduras--with an average AIDS incidence of 99.8 per million--exhibits a rate over four times that of the rest of Latin America.

The Feminization of Poverty in Honduras

Honduras has universal primary education, nevertheless just 44% of girls attend primary school. Forty percent of Honduran women have not received formal education, and just 25% of women graduate from high school and university. Although almost half of all children are born to single mothers who head households, just 25% of the paid work force is female. In 1989 elections, women occupied 9.4% of seats in Congress and 6.2% of all mayorships (Norsworthy and Barry 1994:127). In some areas of the country, the percentage of households headed by women reaches 80% (Peckenham and Street 1986:5). Traditional conceptions of the role of woman as a housewife and mother predominate in Honduras, but the reality is that poverty and

Table 1.1.
Social Indicators for Honduras by 1993

Demographics	
Population (1992)	5.5. million
Fertility rate (1993)	4.9 children born per woman
Population density (per sq km)	48.7
Population living in urban areas	45% (1990)
Population under 16 years old	51% (1990)
Health	
Infant mortality (1993)	59 per 1000
Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births	220
Life expectancy (1993)	66 years
Population growth rate (1993)	2.9%
Children less than five years old underweight (1990)	19.8%
Infants underweight at birth (1990)	9%
Education	
Adult literacy (1990)	76% (males); 71% females
Poverty	
Population living in poverty (1990)	73% (urban); 79% (rural)
Population without access to safe water (1988-90)	44% (urban); 51% (rural)
Population without access to health facilities (1987-90)	38%

Source: Norsworthy and Barry, 1994:110.

irresponsible fatherhood demand that women bring income into the household, and in some cases assume all the expenses and the education of their children

I chose Tegucigalpa to conduct fieldwork because the majority of the radio stations that broadcast throughout the country are based there. The study of radio programs in Tegucigalpa allowed me to observe the broader national picture from the perspective of the capital. Most women's organizations also have their main offices in Tegucigalpa.

Like many other Latin American capitals, Tegucigalpa has experienced an influx of migrants from the countryside. Currently this capital has a population of one million. It is a city without the basic services or infrastructure to support its population

growth, rich cultural diversity and social distinctions accompanying a developing class system.

During the second period of my research, (January 1999), Honduras had just been devastated by hurricane Mitch. Problems such as sanitation; rise in rates of crime, and homelessness increased in Tegucigalpa after the catastrophic consequences of this natural disaster. During this time of my fieldwork it almost sounded ridiculous to worry or to talk about any problem that was not related to the post-Mitch reconstruction. In the context of the hurricane women were among the less fortunate. Refugee camps were full of women and their children. Radio programs played a very prominent role during and after the hurricane in organizing the reconstruction process. I was able to record some radio programs about the post-Mitch reconstruction and the reactions from different groups in Tegucigalpa which further deepened my understanding of the negotiation of gender identities in Honduras.

2 Methodology

To study the role women's radio programs play in the negotiation of gender stereotypes in Honduran mass media and society, I conducted ethnographic research in Tegucigalpa from May to July 1998, and January, and March 1999.⁵ All the quotes presented throughout this thesis have been translated from the original in Spanish. My research consisted in the following procedures:

1) Preliminary research

I did a preliminary research to discover what radio programs were more popular in the country. I conducted interviews using an sample of anybody who agreed to help,⁶ of 10 women and 2 men in Tegucigalpa. These interviews were unrecorded, informal, and semi-structured. Notes and observations were taken during and after the interviews. From these interviews I gained an idea of the primary radio programs listened to, and of the alternative programs that were being produced in Tegucigalpa at the time. During this first stage of my research, I became interested in the programs produced by women's organizations as an alternative perspective to compare with current messages in the mass media in the country. I found "traditional messages" whose representations supported the dominant historical gender patterns of Honduras, and "alternative messages" that promoted new ways to portray social relations based on innovative concepts for gender relations. As I could observe, alternative messages resisted and contested traditional gender roles.

2) Ethnographic content analysis of gender representations in radio programs

To determine the gender images portrayed in radio programs and other media in Honduras, I developed ethnographic content analysis (ECA) (Altheide 1996). I

⁵ My fieldwork consisted in a total of 100 days.

⁶ "Opportunistic sample" (Agar 1996:168).

recorded radio programs in Honduras between May and July of 1998.⁷ This was complemented with a review of newspapers, magazines, television, and the press in the Internet.

I selected a sample of radio programs and stations based on my preliminary research that provided me with the information about radio programs' popularity, and the hours in which radio programs had more audiences. I recorded 35 programs from the various radio stations from the early hours in the morning-5:30-6:00 a.m. until noon-during the time radio shows were more listened to.

3) Ethnographic content analysis of *Tiempo de Hablar*

To analyze how the radio programs developed by women's organizations negotiate the gender stereotypes portrayed by traditional messages, I developed ethnographic content analysis (Altheide 1996) of the radio program *Tiempo de Hablar* developed by the women's organization *Centro de Estudios de Las Mujeres*.

I analyzed 16 *Tiempo de Hablar*'s broadcastings presented in *Radio América* from 1997, and 1998, using tape recordings of these programs obtained directly from the program's producers.⁸

4) Comparative analysis of traditional and alternative gender representations in radio programs

I did a comparative analysis of gender roles represented in both kinds of discourses, the traditional and the alternative. I designed a protocol (Appendix 3) as an instrument to gather and decipher the information provided by each radio program which I analyzed based on a series of categories or variables identified in the same programs.

⁷ See also Appendix 1 for a description of the various radio programs recorded, the date recorded, the main focus of the program and the issues they address.

⁸ See Appendix 2 for the detailed description of the *Tiempo de Hablar*'s episodes analyzed.

5) Ethnographic fieldwork

The second component of my research consisted of ethnographic fieldwork with direct informants in Tegucigalpa. I conducted ethnographic fieldwork to:

- a. Understand the social context in which the radio programs were produced
- b. Understand the production of the different radio programs from the producers' perspective
- c. Discern if women's alternative discourses were having an impact on the audience and, hence stimulating social change, and
- d. Evaluate if different people, according to their age, gender, educational level, and socio-economic status, accepted or resisted women's alternative discourse.

a. **The Social Context of Gender**

Gender relations is a topic that can be discussed in many places in rural and urban Honduras. It is relatively easy to encourage people to talk about gender relations in different settings: in a cab; in line to obtain a visa at the U.S. embassy; in a restaurant or a bar; at a party or at the airport. I attempted to raise the issue in most of the situations cited and observed. From these observations, I took fieldnotes. Finally I collected a variety of published and unpublished documents, including historical information about Honduran radio from the Honduran National Museum in Tegucigalpa.

Participant observation included my involvement with the *Centro de Derechos de la Mujer's* (CDM) activities such as: attending the production of one radio program, visiting the CDM office, and spending the work day with the personnel. I attended the celebration of the radio program's fifth anniversary. Unfortunately, the evaluation meetings and the workshops developed in rural communities by the radio producers did not coincide with the periods I conducted fieldwork. I also observed and participated in socially oriented communication projects, such as the film produced as part of the campaign against AIDS sponsored by the United Nations.

b. **Radio programs' production**

To understand the production of the different radio programs from the producers' perspective I conducted 9 in-depth open-ended interviews with specialists in the production of radio programs. Three were the producers of the radio program *Tiempo de Hablar*; two were Honduran historians who provided information about the historical development of the mass media in Honduras; three were the producers of the *Radio y Televisión Católicas* (The Catholic Radio and Television); one was the director of the organization "*Andar*" which produces the gender education program *Siempre vivas*. Interviews were tape recorded and ranged from one to three hours in length. Notes and observations were taken at the time of the interview and were also recorded in fieldnotes.

c. **Audiences responses to a *Tiempo de Hablar's* episode**

To discern if women's alternative discourses were having an impact on the audience, and evaluate if different people, according to their age, gender, educational level, and socio-economic status, accepted or resisted women's alternative discourse I conducted the following procedures:

- I recorded informants' reactions to the *Tiempo de Hablar* radio program. The sample included anybody who agreed to help, not necessarily radio listeners. I included people of different ages and genders in Tegucigalpa, and asked them to listen to an episode about domestic violence from the radio program *Tiempo de Hablar*. I used a recording that addressed domestic violence, as this is the topic most referred to in the program.

This sample included:

- A. **Individual interviews** of two men and four women ranging between 20 and 42 years old. All of them belong to popular-working classes in Honduras, and most of them migrated from the countryside to find better work opportunities

of work and social services in the capital. These discussions were not tape recorded. I took field notes and subsequently recorded my observations.

- B. **One focus group** comprised of 5 female informants ranging in ages from 22 to 54. These informants were more varied, three of them belonged to popular-working class, migrants from the countryside; one of them was a South American sociologist who teaches at the Catholic University in Tegucigalpa, and another was a young woman, also from South America, who studies engineering at the National University of Tegucigalpa.
- C. **One focus group** was comprised of 4 male informants ranging from 20 to 42 years old. This group was also varied, as two of the informants were a second generation from parents who migrated from the countryside to Tegucigalpa, another was a young man from Tegucigalpa, the three of them from popular-working classes, and the other informant was a 42 years old man who studied a bachelor at the National University and currently teaches English.

I tape recorded both groups, allowing participants to lead the discussion based on their reactions to the radio program.

■ **Content analysis of audience's letters**

For the analysis of audiences' responses to the *Tiempo de Hablar* radio program I did content analysis of a sample of letters sent to the producers by members of their audience. I photocopied 78 letters which I obtained directly from the radio program's producers.⁹

⁹ See appendix 4 for a sample of the letters sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*.

Limitations of this Study

I have restricted the focus of this thesis to a comparison between “traditional” gender representations that preserve the historical gender roles and stereotypes in Honduran society, and “alternative” gender images aimed at promoting social change in gender roles and relations. This study does not attempt to analyze the entire universe of social gender relations in Honduran society. It is based on an analysis of gender representations in radio broadcasts, as well as a study of potential audiences’ reactions to gender imagery, and the ideology that informs these representations. This work is the beginning of a broader study that will further assess the actual influence of “alternative” radio programs on shaping Honduran collective identities.

Due to the limited amount of time and resources, this study focuses solely on Tegucigalpa and is therefore not representative of rural communities. For this reason, the analysis of audience’s responses for the program *Tiempo de Hablar* is just focused on informants who live in Tegucigalpa, although the program has an important impact on rural communities. The rural audience’s perspective is analyzed through my study of the letters sent by some of *Tiempo de Hablar*’s listeners.

The letters sent by some *Tiempo de Hablar*’s listeners to the producers demonstrate the impact the program is having in rural and urban society. The program already has hundreds of letters that might be further analyzed. However, in my thesis I included only a small percentage of all the letters. I used my sample of letters as supplementary information, rather than as the basis of my study. Nevertheless, the letters are a good source for future research about the program focusing in audiences responses.

Future research also might include the participant observation of real audiences of the program, and of the direct interaction between radio producers and listeners. For this purpose, it will be necessary to spend time in the listeners’ communities and observe if there are direct connections between the change of attitudes and the information provided in the radio programs.

The Role of Radio in Honduran Society

What is a Honduran? A Honduran is that one who walks with a little radio by his ear.
Salvadoran saying (Chaverri, Pers. Comm. June 1998).

Of all the audio-visual mass media in Honduras, radio is by far the most popular. Listening to the news on radio is a daily activity. There is an aural culture identifiable and shared by most Hondurans. Men routinely listen to the soccer games on the radio, even while in attendance at the stadium. Some people turn down the volume on the television so they can watch the soccer game with the commentary on the radio presenters broadcasting it, as they “give more excitement to the game” (Molina, González interviews, July 1999). Working while listening the radio as background is part of many people’s daily life. In rural areas radio transmit messages in the way telephone does in other places. Many people in the countryside send messages to relatives or friends that concern immediate actions such as “pick me up at 8:00 a.m. at the detour,” or to communicate relatives about someone’s death. Housewives doing domestic work have the radio on most of the time. Certain music themes used for the news broadcasting, radio programs and characters such as Pituro Sagastume, Tuto Gómez, *Tres Patines*, *Frijol y Gañote*, *Platicando con mi Barbero*, *Cuentos y Leyendas de Honduras*, *Casos y Cosas de Casas*, and *La Noticia Sin Malicia*, are familiar to most Hondurans.

In contemporary Honduras, television is partly taking the place of radio, especially in cities. However, radio is still the most important medium in the countryside. Newspapers often do not reach some rural communities and when they do, they are out of date. Honduran youth, particularly in the cities, tend to prefer television and canned programs coming from other countries especially the United States and Mexico. Soap operas or *telenovelas*, imported from other Latin American countries like Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and the Dominican Republic are very popular, not just for women as is believed, but also for many men.

History of Media in Honduras

Francisco Morazán, a Honduran national hero, is credited with having introduced the first printing press to the country in 1829 to publish his newspaper *La Gaceta*. In 1994 Norsworthy and Barry (1994:105) found that the country had four daily newspapers, six television channels, and 152 radio stations. This situation has changed over the last few years. By 1999 there were 9 newspapers, 13 television channels, including the Catholic and Evangelic channels. Moncada (1996) provides a list of more than 300 national, regional, and local radio stations.¹⁰ However, the situations portrayed by Norsworthy and Barry for 1994 and Moncada for 1996 are both indicative of how radio is a predominant media in Honduras as compared with television and newspapers. Because of the high illiteracy and low income of the population, radio is the medium with the greatest outreach in the country. Norsworthy and Barry (1994:105) found that there were over one million radios with about 3.5 million weekly listeners.

During its first years radio broadcasting was in the hands of small companies created with little investment, using mostly second hand equipment from North American stations (Pagán, González interviews, January 1999). Radio programs in Honduras emerged with the entrance of the United Fruit Company to the country. *La Voz del Trópico* (The Voice of the Tropics) was an experimental station and belonged to The Tropical Radio Telegraph, a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company which had received a governmental concession to operate telecommunications in Honduras (Moncada 1996:17). *La Voz del Trópico* started operating in Tegucigalpa in 1921 when the government granted Tropical Radio a 99 year radio frequency permit. *El Eco de Honduras* and *HRN, La Voz del Comercio*, started operating in 1929 and 1933, respectively, beginning national radio production (Moncada 1996:21). In 1955, there were 18 stations broadcasting throughout Honduras.

Keeping radio stations' on the air was not an easy task in Honduras during the early years. In large part, this was due to the exclusive right claimed by the United

¹⁰ Appendix 5 presents the list of radio stations in Honduras by 1996

Fruit Company to broadcast in *La Voz del Trópico* without competition. Afterwards, there was a governmental control of the media during the 1930 and 1940s during Carías' dictatorship. However, after the 1950s, opportunities opened up for radio producers.

During the early years, Honduras' radio had cultural, and educational objectives, transmitting concerts and conferences (Moncada 1996:27). Historian Joaquín Pagán (González interviews, Jan. 1999) referred to the origins of radio in Honduras as follows:

In its origins radio had the obligation to do two things: One, to publish its programing on the newspapers of that time, *La Epoca*, *El Día* and *El Cronista*, and also to identify themselves every half an hour through their names, like *HRN*, *La Voz de Honduras*, *HRA*, *La Voz de Lempira*, etc, etc. *HRN* had speakers in the... central park [of Tegucigalpa].... *La Voz de Lempira* had them on *La Merced* park. In those times, around the 1940s, there were not many portable radios like now, in those times people used to go to these parks to listen to the news.

After the 1960s the reception of radio broadcasts in the country increased, and the stations started to sell spaces of air-time, permitting the broadcasters to have a broader margin of freedom to express themselves.

Given the importance of electronic communication media in Honduras, one of the first objectives of governments and their opponents has been to take control of the radio. For instance, in July 1959 Colonel Armando Velázquez Cerrato tried to take over president Ramón Villeda Morales. The coup was aborted because the students in favor of the government controlled the radio. The insurgents were not able to control the media. However, clandestine radio broadcasts from Nicaragua protesting against the government were essential in the organization of the groups planning the coup (Pagán, González interviews Jan. 1999).¹¹

More recently, radio has become more important in the countryside due to battery operated transistor radios. Even in the poorest community almost everyone has

¹¹ The musical theme of this radio station was the "Colonel Bogey March" that appeared in the movie "The Bridge on the River Kwai" (Lean 1957).

access to a radio. Radio propagation has been crucial in the country for political campaigns, the diffusion of religious ideas, and the integration of the population in the nation through patriotic symbolism. As Martin Barbero (1993:195) observed, radio was one of the principal media that facilitated a connection between the *campesino* cultures, and the urban world in Latin America since the 1930s. Film in some countries, and radio in others, gave national identity a face and a voice. This identity would turn out to be of vital importance for the nations as it softened the cultural clashes, producing in its way a synthesis of the “traditional” rural culture with the impositions and demands of the city.

As Honduras became more integrated into the world economy in the 1940s and 1950s, the cost of radio programming increased. As a result, broadcasters allied with big business. These alliances represent the big Honduran radio chains. To survive within such a competitive environment, the small companies have also had to join the big enterprises (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999).

The great importance telecommunications has had in diffusing religious and political propaganda, has meant that the big industries have always wanted to control the media. The wealthier companies have tremendous power in shaping public opinion, depending on the political and economic interests they are serving (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999). A third influence on radio emerged with the military. In 1992, the armed forces of Honduras created *Radio Concierto* (*La Prensa*, March 2, 1998). There are still small radio stations dedicated to music programs especially from North America. Some of them follow the disc jockey system and telephone call-ins. These companies are under-capitalized and do not offer radio news (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999). To counter the power of the big chains, independent stations in Honduras were forced to join forces, forming the “Association for Independent Stations.”

For its part, the Catholic Church founded its own radio station, *Radio Católica*, in the mid 1950s. Catholic television was due to start broadcasting in Honduras in March 1999. Every department of Honduras has its own Catholic radio

station which is subsidized, and operated by the local parish (Zavala, González interviews, Jan. 1999). In addition to the radio stations and the television channel, the Catholic newspaper *Fides* is distributed on Sundays in the parish churches. The Catholic Church through its media is including women as subjects of change (Figure 1).

Some progressive groups inside the Catholic Church (such as “The Company of Jesus”) created “*Radio Progreso*” in the North of the country. This radio program has promoted the popular struggles of peasants and agricultural workers along the North Coast. Another religious radio station also closely allied with Liberation Theology used to function in the central region of the country, in Juticalpa, Olancho. This station served to bring together peasant groups with a populist and Christian democracy orientation (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999). *Radio Tocoa*, in Tocoa, near the Atlantic coast also has focused on social justice, and human rights programs. *Radio Tocoa* includes programs oriented to women’s issues, specifically legal counseling and human rights. The Catholic Church also organized *Las Escuelas Radiofónicas Suyapa*¹² as a literacy project for adults transmitted all over the country (Moncada 1994:24). Consonant with the use of evangelism in Latin America, evangelists are also using the radio to proselytize.

In sum, few cities in Honduras are without at least one radio station. One of the main characteristics of radio programs in Honduras is that the news’ broadcasting programs are open to the public. Anybody can participate through phone calls or showing up at the studios. As such, men and women from distinct social classes are able to participate. Their commentary infuses the news programs as well as those programs dedicated to express public opinion with a sense of local demands (Pagan, González interviews 1999).

According to Moncada (1994: 23-24) Honduran radio is still the main “informative” media, and has a relevant role for the diffusion of national and international news. However, Moncada believes that, despite its enormous potential,

¹² Suyapa’s Radio Schools (Suyapa is the Honduran blessing mother).

La Mujer: algo más

Según datos que maneja Visitación Padilla, hasta noviembre de 1998, un aproximado de 30 mujeres se presentaron diariamente a la Fiscalía de la Mujer a interponer demanda por maltrato físico o verbal.

YERMINA TORRES MANGUERA



Alicia Almendares, integrante del Comité Hondureño por la Paz Visitación Padilla.

"Dicen que fue una mujer, hubiese dado mi columna vertebral por verlas salir", pocos hombres tienen la valentía de repetir los versos de esta melodía, porque son pocos y temen aceptar la realidad o porque son cobardes y se esconden en el machismo.

Es por este absurdo machismo que no se dan cuenta que la mujer, ya sea como madre, amiga, hermana, esposa o hija, los estimula para que puedan lograr su objetivo de superación; es esa estrella que les ilumina, alegría y compañía en su caminar por esta vida.



No me des la espalda

**dame tu cariño
respeta mi intimidad**

Pero a cambio de tantos sacrificios, en algunos casos sólo recibe golpes, insultos, indiferencia, acoso y desconfianza, porque según los "machos" de esta sociedad, no tiene capacidad para desempeñar un cargo u oficio.

El machismo es el resultado de una cultura patriarcal inculcada muchas veces desde la educación errónea en el hogar, basada en el principio de que el hombre es el jefe, es el que manda, como si lo que viviera a su cargo fuera un regimiento, o a los empleados de una fábrica a quienes puede mandar y gritar para que cumplan sus órdenes.

Pero si a las puertas del nuevo siglo el machismo, como un gusano, sigue carcomiendo el cerebro de algunos hombres hondureños, es porque la mujer lo ha permitido por no reclamar sus derechos, por no tener autoestima.

AUTOESTIMA Y MACHISMO

"El autoestima es el cariño, el aprecio, el respeto y la consideración que cada mujer tiene de sí misma, esta es la parte fundamental en la vida de cualquier mujer y es necesario que todas tengamos este concepto para hacer valer nuestra dignidad".

Desde su infancia la mujer se va preparando para una vida donde debe ser sumisa y estar sujeta a las órdenes de su marido quien es el amo y señor. Este concepto provoca en algunos casos que se vea a la mujer como un objeto o una cosa a la cual se puede usar y después desecharla y golpearla cuando el amo lo decida.

"A ninguna mujer le gusta que su pareja la maltrate, y hay que romper el mito de que las mujeres somos masoquistas y funcionamos mejor cuando se nos maltrata; esta es una de las estrategias de la cultura del machismo", afirmó Alicia Almendares.

Desde hace muchos años las



Las organizaciones populares han encontrado en las mujeres una punta de lanza

recomendó Alicia Almendares, integrante del Comité Hondureño por la Paz Visitación Padilla. La mujer debe amarse a sí misma y saber que es capaz de sobrepasar cualquier obstáculo y enfrentarse a la vida con esta mentalidad, porque primero debe valorarse para que después los demás lo hagan, recomendó Almendares, una valiente mujer que lucha por lograr la equidad entre el hombre y la mujer.

YA NO MÁS GOLPES

En Honduras es tan frecuente ver mujeres con golpes en su delicado rostro, magullones en el cuerpo o escuchar en las noticias que un malnacido cogió la vida de su compañera o de otra mujer sólo porque se negó a ser suya. Pero esto no puede seguir porque las mujeres no son una bolsa de arena para que un sujeto que tiene complejos de boxeador practique ese deporte y trate de demostrar, según él, su hombría y al hacerlo sólo demuestra su cobardía y actitud de un canalla.



La seguridad pública está encomendada, tanto el hombre como a la mujer

que una ama de casa

A las puertas del Gran Jubileo del año 2000 y pese a las muchas organizaciones femeninas y a las luchas emprendidas, son muy pocos los logros que se han obtenido porque hay muchos obstáculos para hacer valer la dignidad de la mujer.



En el seno de la mujer se forja el futuro de todo hombre

CÓMO SE MANIFIESTA LA VIOLENCIA?

Desde el año 1997 entró en vigencia la Ley contra la Violencia Doméstica; esta fue uno de los logros de la lucha emprendida por varios grupos feministas; según ellos, con esto disminuirán las estadísticas de violencia contra la mujer.

La violencia contra la mujer se manifiesta de varias maneras, no sólo los golpes son violencia, según el Consultorio Jurídico Popular; hay violencia cuando el hombre no le deja salir de la casa o cuando la anda vigilando; cuando el hombre la insulta y la humilla, cuando el marido no es responsable con dar el dinero para los gastos de la casa, cuando una mujer camina por la calle y los hombres la tocan o le dicen palabras groseras.



La mujer sirve en todo campo social; ejemplo vivo lo de las hermanas religiosas

aprovecha, por esto surge la violencia doméstica.

El peor error es que la mujer lo acepte como algo natural y se resigne a que así tiene que ser porque debe obediencia a su conyuge.

La mujer del hogar pobre se queda humillada en casa, a veces sin comida, implorando a Dios para que cuando él llegue borracho no la golpee y obligue a tener intimidad contra su voluntad.

El machismo es el patrimonio de una cultura patriarcal milenaria, es decir, que este mal viene de siglos atrás y continúa poriendo al hombre en el pedestal más alto, en el lugar donde las leyes están a su favor si es una persona influyente y de quien las mujeres tienen que cumplir sus órdenes.



La mujer juega un papel importante en su hogar, muchas veces como jefe de familia

cuando se abusa sexualmente de ella, cuando la amenazan de muerte, cuando el hombre le quita los hijos a una mujer y no le permite siquiera verlos.

LA IGLESIA Y LA MUJER

La discriminación y violencia contra la mujer existe en cualquier lugar donde haya presencia femenina y masculina, en los institutos de educación, en la universidad, en la fábrica, en la oficina, en el taller, en la clínica y hasta en las iglesias, específicamente en la católica.

En la Iglesia Católica ningún ministerio importante está dirigido por una mujer, y las decisiones que tengan que ver con la tarea pastoral y asuntos importantes las toman los hombres; aunque todos los religiosos dicen que debe existir la igualdad para todos, no es cierto porque marginan a la mujer. Desde 1972 existe la Pastoral de la Mujer.

En el país son muchas las organizaciones femeninas que luchan incansablemente por disminuir la violencia contra la mujer, pero parece ser que estas luchas no dan resultado porque la violencia sigue existiendo.

A la llegada del nuevo milenio las mujeres debemos continuar con la lucha porque algún día, al abrir nuestros ojos, encontraremos una vida justa para nosotras. No donde la mujer sea quien guíe a la sociedad sino donde las decisiones sean la voluntad del hombre y la mujer. Y donde la vida sea diferente para aquellas mujeres que en forma silenciosa pero heroica lo dan todo por sus hijos, se entregan en el hogar, en la oficina, en el aula, en el taller, en el hospital, en la calle,

en los hogares ricos, en las casuchas de cartón, en todo y con todo.

Hay que respetar a las personas por sí mismas, en la integridad de su ser corporal, intelectual y espiritual; para que nunca se las rebaje hasta ser consideradas y tratadas como un objeto o un instrumento al servicio de intereses políticos o económicos; que la dignidad humana esté por sobre todo.

La mujer es: "La única criatura de la tierra a la que Dios ha amado por misma y a la que le ha confiado la administración de toda la creación (Gaudium et spes, 24).



La mujer es la administradora de la creación

and apart from some isolated projects, radio in Honduras has not been used effectively for developmental and educational purposes. The possibilities that radio offer have not been developed, even though the country has the necessary infrastructure for radio production and broadcasting.

Women and Mass Communication in Honduras

At the beginning of the 19th century, José Cecilio del Valle¹³ conducted a study concerning women's participation in Honduran political life. He mentioned the role that the newspaper should play in the incorporation of women to the nation:

Women's influence is important. It is necessary to integrate them in the life of the nation, and to that purpose it would be convenient that each newspaper would publish an article to call their attention. This would incline them to read the newspapers, and by doing so they would acquire knowledge (in Milla 1998).

Following Anderson's (1991) ideas about the construction of imagined communities for nationalist ideals, the spread of nationalism through the broadcast, and print media was essential to strengthen the embryonic nations in the 19th century. Del Valle recognized women's influence on society, and the need to integrate them as part of the nation. To be integrated, he suggested, women must be provided with the "right knowledge." Father Jose Trinidad Reyes¹⁴ adopted a different position almost at the same historical period of Valle. Using the feminine pseudonym *Sofía Seyer*, his position towards women's rights was ostensibly that of an insider. Sofia Seyer expressed that "only the plight of women has remained amidst of all the freedom that ensued the abolition of slavery" (in Milla 1998). Father Reyes, or Sofia Seyer encouraged women to make a claim for a better education and against sexual tyranny:

¹³ One of Honduras' founding fathers, a relevant thinker and writer who is considered one of the first Latin Americans to foresee an inter-American doctrine. He wrote the Honduran declaration of Independence in 1821 (Mariñas 1983: 260).

¹⁴ Considered the "first Honduran poet" (Mariñas 1983:337). Founder of Honduras' National University, dramatist, and a feminist.

“Compañeras, reuníos conmigo para reclamar, dondequiera, contra ese culpable olvido de nuestra educación...contra esa tiranía sexual que nos despoja de nuestros derechos más sagrados. Si logramos que se nos atienda, ya no seremos seres medios entre el hombre y el bruto y el círculo de nuestras ideas se extenderá más allá de las niñerías y del modo de condimentar las viandas” (in Milla 1998).¹⁵

In 1923 an organization called “*Cultura Femenina*,” emerged under the leadership of Visitación Padilla. Padilla was one of the most remarkable women leaders in Honduras, was a journalist, and published a variety of articles in *La Prensa* (Villars 1991:34). In 1948 she was leading the “Feminine Front For Legality.” In that year Padilla attempted to reclaim women’s political rights. *Cultura Femenina* had progressive ideas concerning laborers. In 1924, the organization demonstrated against the entrance of the U.S. marines to Tegucigalpa. The women’s group of 1923 first emerged as a response to anti-imperialism (Milla 1998). *Cultura Femenina* also sponsored a night school for illiterate women, and published the magazine *Cultura de la Mujer* aimed at promoting the organizations’ activities, and denouncing the unfair situation of Honduran workers laboring for the “imperialist companies” (Villars 1991:46). Gabriela García, another member of the organization, was a Salvadoran who lived in Honduras until her expulsion in 1944 for her long history of opposing the Cárrias dictatorship (1932-48) (Norsworthy and Barry 1994:128).

The “*Comité Femenino Hondureño*” organized in 1947, presented petitions for women political rights, but with limited success. Consequently, the *Comité* organized the radio program “*La Hora de la Mujer*” (Women’s Hour), and started the publication of the magazine “*La Mujer de America*” (Milla 1998).

The influence of the “modern” liberated woman from the United States of America visibly emerged in the adoption of new ideas on the part of middle-upper class women in Tegucigalpa. The most widely read magazines by women from these

¹⁵ *Compañeras*, join me to claim, wherever, against the deliberated neglecting of our education....against that sexual tyranny that takes away our most sacred rights. If our claims are listened to, we will stop being an intermediate stage between man and beast, and the scope of our ideas will extend further than childish games and knowing how to season a meal (in Milla 1998).

social classes published abstracts and biographies about preeminent women in the United States (Milla 1998).

However, the role of women in Honduran media was almost non-existent. From the 1930s to the 1960s, radio was for the most part, men's business. Women used to participate in radio only in cultural or artistic programs. Some of the most well known women in those years were Leticia Raudales, Orfa Mejía, Cristina Rubio, María Dolores Zelaya, Ligia Ramírez, Luci Ondina, among others. They acted mainly as broadcasters or as radio theater actors (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999) (Moncada 1994:30-33).

When universal suffrage was granted to women in 1955, women also became a target for political propaganda. New messages for women were spread through radio, magazines and the newspapers (Milla 1998:92). As a result, more women started to be slowly incorporated into radio programs as presenters, and even in executive positions. Nevertheless, despite this incorporation of women, radio programs in Honduras still had a masculine content (Pagán, González interviews, Jan. 1999). Mass media continued to reproduce the "traditional" role women played in society. Women in upper classes in Tegucigalpa had more access to express themselves through mass media, although, they did not necessarily take advantage of it to question the established values. As Milla (1998:95) points out, this situation is illustrated on a message the Honduran First Lady directed to women in 1965:

...the most important thing for women is that they have reached civil rights without forgetting the traditional feminine essential virtues. Honduran woman who participates in the next elections, and those women who will be elected as assembly deputies, should act with the devotion for peace, tolerance, and prudence that come from our condition as mothers and wives.

From this passage it can be inferred that women were still mainly represented as mothers and wives. A sort of resistance towards the change of roles can be identified in this passage. The idea of not forgetting the traditional role assigned to women is prevalent despite the opportunity women might have to participate in the politic life of the country. In the case that women might participate in politics, they had

to comply with their role of bringing peace, tolerance and prudence to the political world. Until 1965, public and official programs in the mass media did not question the determined social values and ideas, but they contributed to establish stereotypes for the feminine and masculine (Milla 1998:99).

In the 1970s' a series of radio programs in Honduras were influenced by the ideas of social development, mass literacy campaigns, and peasants' demands for land and political rights. The National Agrarian Institute (INA), was created in 1961 to organize rural cooperatives, propose colonization projects, and administer land distribution (Norsworthy and Barry 1994:75). The Peasant Management Project for Agrarian Reform (PROCCARA) was created supported by United Nations and under the direction of the Brazilian Clodomir Santos de Moraes and a number of radical agronomists and economists (Lapper and Painter 1985:66). One of the activities developed by PROCCARA included the use of radio (Chaverri, personal communication, June 1999).

Within the context of rural demands for a just agrarian reform (Yudelman 1987:35), the Honduran Federation of Peasant Women (FEHMUC) emerged in 1978. As Norsworthy and Barry (1994:129) point out, FEHMUC is one of the few female peasant organizations in Latin America. FEHMUC grew out of a program of rural housewives' clubs established by CARITAS, the social action arm of the Catholic Church, and the Social Christian peasant movement in 1967 (Yudelman 1987:35; Norsworthy and Barry 1994:129). By the end of the 1980s and beginnings of the 1990s, FEHMUC worked with radio schools of *Acción Cultural Popular Hondureña* (Honduran Popular Cultural Action) to provide literacy programs to peasant women and other projects related to children, income generation, and the provision of sanitary and basic health services (Yudelman 1987:40).

Since the 1960s, some Honduran women and men began to express criticism through the media over the traditional gender roles shaped by *machismo* and patriarchy, and against women's discrimination. In 1967, the Honduran historian and sociologist Ramón Oqueli (Oqueli, *La Prensa*, September 26, 1967; October 6, 1967;

May 23, 1968) published several articles in the newspaper concerning women's situation and *machismo* in the country expressing in one of them that:

Honduras is a country mostly shaped by women. As men's traditional responsibility was to fight against each other in the mountains, the exclusive care of children was up to the women (Ouelí, Sept. 26, 1967).

More recently, freelance writers, such as Gloria Leticia de Lazarus, Luis Zavala and Otto Martin Wolf also have published various articles concerning gender issues in *La Prensa* (1998-1999 <http://www.laprensahn.com>). Some women's organizations have their own periodicals. *Entre Amigas* has been published since 1992 with the support of the Global Fund for Women, *Pan para el Mundo*, and the *Comité Visitación Padilla*. By 1999, this magazine had published 31 volumes covering a variety of topics related to gender relations and feminism in Honduras and the world (Guifarro 1999). The *Centro de Estudios de la Mujer* Magazine, "*Mujer*" has also been published for more than ten years (*Centro de Estudios de La Mujer* 1997) (Figure 2).

Women organizations have continued developing radio programs such as the *Comité Visitación Padilla*'s radio program, the ANDAR association radio training (Figure 3) and, the *Centro de Derechos de Las Mujeres* program. Most of these programs focus on domestic violence and women's legal demands.

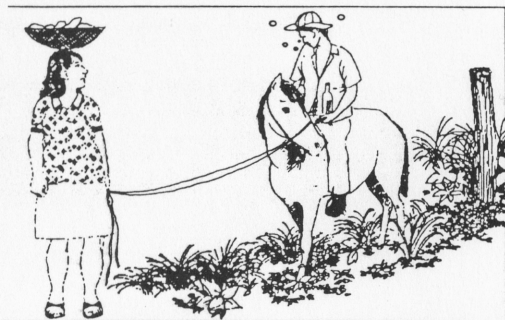
Regarding the inclusion of female reporters in the general radio programming in Honduras, my analysis shows that there is some participation of women in the news reporting, and also as producers of their own programs. However, in most of the radio stations that I analyzed, men are still primary producers and presenters. Even when the presentation is shared by men and women, men's participation is greater (Radio programs content analysis, June 1999).

Regardless of the gender of producers and presenters, the challenge for women and social actors in general is to change the gender dominant values and traditional assumptions in mass communications. The risk is that these values might as well be reproduced by female presenters through their internalization of male norms (Creedon

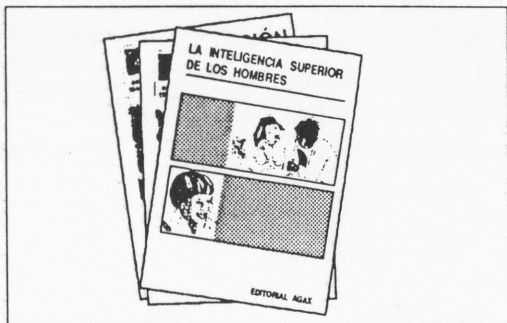


Figure 2
Centro de Estudios de la Mujer Magazine
"Mujer"

- ¿ Quién desvaloriza a la mujer en estas situaciones ?
Ponga una + al par de su respuesta.



_____ La Mujer
_____ El Hombre



_____ La Mujer
_____ El Hombre
_____ Los medios de comunicación



___ La Mujer
___ El Hombre

12 Siemprevivas

Figure 3
"Siemprevivas"

Asociación Andar Radio Training Program

Who is the responsible for devaluating women in these situations?

1993).

The current situation for women's representation in radio programs in Honduras will be detailed in the next chapter.

The Representation of Gender Stereotypes in Honduran Mass Media

To understand gender representations in the Honduran mass media, it is necessary to illustrate the nature of Honduran social structure and the ideologies that inform Honduran conceptions about gender.

Understanding Honduran society as multicultural makes it difficult to categorize gender relations in a general way. Even though the *mestizo* dominant group has imposed a model that is officially accepted for the whole country, there are primary differences in gender relations between different ethnic groups, and between the cities and the countryside.

Following a pattern of irresponsible fatherhood, thousands of households in Honduras are led by a woman, helped by her matrilineal extended family. Peckenhams and Street (1986:5) found that in some areas of the country the percentage of households headed by women reaches 80%. A sort of matrifocal kinship system works in some areas where a woman might have successive male partners with whom she has children, but who normally are raised by her and her extended family. Households led by women exist all over the country, and among the different groups of population the model is more or less accepted, depending on the kind of community and social class where it happens. A study done by Fauné (1995) demonstrated that the family model "officially" accepted in Central América is based on the assumptions that families are monogamous, bi-parental, patriarchal, stable, based on formal marriage, middle class, nuclear, and with an average of three children. Within this model of family the man's responsibility is to provide resources to the household, and the woman's is to be a good wife and mother, a household administrator, and guarantee her children's education in their first years (Fauné 1995:52).

This family model in many cases does not reflect the reality for households in Honduras and the other countries of Central America. According to Fauné (1995:53), this is a myth that affects women negatively, as this family model has worked to maintain the patriarchal ideal promoting women who conform to their role inside such

a system. Fauné proposes the identification of family models that are more in line with the reality for Central American countries. The *arreglos familiares* (family arrangements) identified by Fauné present characteristics that are opposed to the “ideal model.” These families are based on common law unions, or couples who cohabit without formal marriage. Normally, these couples pertain to poor or extremely poor socioeconomical strata. Supported by extended families, these unions present a great influence of female’s authority. The average number of children is from four to seven per union. The first union can be broken and the woman might take charge of the family or she might establish several relations and have children with different partners. The first union also may last, and the woman might accept that the man has other relations and children outside the main household (Fauné 1995:55).

In the cities, especially among upper-middle class groups, single mothers will often be ostracized, seen as subjects of bad luck or bad behavior. In the cities, single mothers will have less support from the kind of extended family that exists in rural communities. Among some ethnic groups, such as the Miskito and the Garífuna, women normally stay in the communities while men go fishing for several months. Women can then establish new relationships, and support all the household needs. Among peasant communities, the participation of men in wage labor also causes them to go outside the households for periods of time. In these situations, children are raised by their mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and other women in the communities. The paternal figure for children might be played by an uncle, older brother, grandfather or even neighbors. The actual father might be only present sometimes or not be present at all in children’s lives. The figure of the *hijo de crianza*, in which a child is raised by another family, not necessary consanguineous, is common in Honduras.

The Representation of Gender in the Mass Media

For the purpose of this study, I use “traditional” gender representations to refer to those images presented in the different Honduran mass media that support the historical gender patterns of the dominant culture. This I contrast with “alternative”

gender representations presented in programs that promote new ways of portraying society based on novel concepts of gender relations. Alternative radio programs resist and contest traditional gender roles in Honduran society. My analysis of “traditional” and “alternative” representations developed through participant observation, interviews, and the content of radio programs revealed how gender “traditional” stereotypes were negotiated in Honduran society.

To understand traditional representations in the media I analyzed various radio programs broadcasted in Honduras during May-August 1998 on *Radio America*, *HRN*, *La Voz de Honduras*, *Reloj*, *Satelite*, and *Radio Esperanza* stations.¹⁶ This information was complemented with information about women’s images in newspapers, television, and the Internet. Following Altheide’s (1996) methodological model,¹⁷ I pursued the content analysis of radio programs (Table 4.1.) to determine the gender images Honduran mass media portrays and their relation to Honduran cultural values.

Data collected in the radio programs and other media like newspapers, magazines, TV, and the Internet show that, in general, mass media in Honduras use stereotypes that preserve the traditional roles males and females have played in the society. However, there are also elements within the dominant Honduran mass media, that show a tendency to change these traditional roles.

The content analysis demonstrated that the representation of gender stereotypes varies, depending on whether they are found in commercial advertisements, regular programing, news broadcasts, governmental programs or messages developed by non governmental or development organizations. Consequently, my analysis will assess these differences.

¹⁶ See appendix 1

¹⁷ See Chapter two for more methodological details.

Table 4.1.
Radio Programs
Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Honduran Radio Programs

Radio Station	No. of Programs
<i>HRN (La Voz de Honduras)</i>	16
<i>Radio América</i>	13
<i>Radio Católica</i>	1
<i>Radio La Esperanza</i>	3
<i>Radio Reloj</i>	1
<i>Radio Satélite</i>	2
Total	35

Source: Radio Programs recordings, May-Aug. 1998

Radio Commercials:

My analysis showed that radio commercials appear to have stronger gender stereotyping than regular radio programming. This phenomenon was also found by Bradway (1996:1) in a study of gender stereotypes in television commercials in the United States. In the radio programs analyzed for this study in Honduras, commercial advertisements appeared mostly in news and humor programs. As is shown in table 4.2., 88.5% of all the programs included commercials, and 100% of news and humor programs had commercial advertisements.

The category "other programs" includes the national teachers' organization's program, the program "*Tiempo de Hablar*" developed by a women's organization, health programs directed by doctors, two miscellaneous topics programs, and an educational program focused on local issues. Of these programs, 71.4% included commercials.

To analyze how females are represented, I considered those advertisements that are explicitly addressed to them, either by mentioning the name of the woman responsible for the action in the commercial ("*Doña Dora adora Doral*," *Noticiero Radio Satélite*, 5/28/98), or by calling women's attention to the product ("*Señora Ama de Casa...*," *En Noticias, Radio América*, 7/27/98). This category did not include

Table 4.2.
Radio Programs with Commercial Advertisements

Radio Station	Programs with commercial advertisements:			
	News	Humor	Other Programs	Total
<i>La Voz de Honduras (HRN)</i>	6/6	5/5	3/5	14/16 (87.5%)
<i>Radio America</i>	9/9	0/0	3/4	12/13 (92.3%)
Other stations ¹⁸	3/3	0/0	2/4	5/7 (71.4%)
Total	18/18 (100%)	5/5 (100%)	8/13 (61.5%)	31/35 (88.5%)

Source: Radio Programs Content analysis, July 1999

those “neutral” commercials in which women are the presenters but the product advertised is not directed explicitly to them. Table 4.3. shows the situation for women’s representations from a total of 170 commercials.

The great majority of commercials (85.2%) did not address women explicitly. Most of them entered in the category of “neutral” as they were presented by a man or a woman but were not especially directed to one or the other. Within this type of neutral commercials, stereotypes also might be identified by the portrayal of traits that are associated with masculinity or femininity, although the advertisement itself does not mention any explicit gender. Not many advertisements referred to men directly by calling men’s attention to the message and thus excluding women. However, the majority of advertisements categorized as “neutral” are presented by men, and the settings, music, and talks can be related to male’s activities. A deeper study of audiences perceptions of these kind of advertisements would help to clarify how these advertisements are understood by men or women.

My sample of radio did not show any commercial that used women’s images to advertise products for men, although this strategy is very common in television and

¹⁸ The category “other stations” included the radio programs recorded in the radio stations *La Esperanza*, *Radio Satellite*, *Radio Reloj* and *Radio Católica*.

Table 4.3.
Women Representations in Commercial Advertisements
Radio Programs in Honduras

Radio Station	Representations of Women			Other commercials (do not address women explicitly)	Total commercials
	Mother- Homemaker	Sex/relations with men	Total		
<i>La Voz de Honduras (HRN)</i>	12 (10%)	1 (0.8%)	13 (10.8%)	107 (89.2%)	120 (100%)
<i>Radio America</i>	9 (24.3%)	0	9 (24.3%)	28 (75%)	37 (100%)
Other stations	3 (23%)	0	3 (23%)	10 (77%)	13 (100%)
Total	24 (14.1%)	1 (0.5 %)	25 (14.7%)	145 (85.2%)	170 (100%)

Source: Radio Programs Content analysis, July 1999

newspapers.

I found 25 commercials that referred explicitly to women, representing 14.7% of the 170 analyzed. Most of these ads referred to women as responsible for house keeping, food, and family health, fitting the category of the "mother's model." One ad, representing 0.8% of the total commercials addressing women, referred to sexual relations between a married couple.

The representation of women in many commercials fits into the image of the mother-homemaker, which is also related to the portrayal of the female role-model by other sources, such as newspapers, television, and publicity. Clearly, advertisements do not present an accurate view of the spectrum of roles females hold in society, or the variety of opportunities which are available and attainable by them (Bradway 1996), as they show the ideal role women should play according to the dominant ideology. When radio news portray women in a broader set of activities, mostly in the political sphere, but also in education, health, human rights, and other aspects of life, it is possible to observe that commercial advertisements are biased in highlighting the mother-homemaker model.

The representation of the mother: The good woman

Women portrayed as “mother models” are linked to house keeping, which includes care for their husbands and their children. They are represented in the house, cooking, cleaning, and giving food or medicine to their relatives. This image normally portrays a good woman who tries to please other people, especially her husband and her children.

Honduran society in general values the figure of the mother as the ultimate and most important role a woman can attain. The roles assigned to women through these kind of advertisements can also be related to the idea of the Blessed Mother’s model which exemplifies women as symbolizing purity and spiritual strength. As pointed out by Ooijens, et. al (1990:7), the relations between men and women in Latin America are structured according to the ideological complex of *machismo* and *marianismo* (Marian devotion). *Machismo* focuses on men’s superiority and female’s inferiority, both seen as natural facts. *Marianismo* is related to women’s spiritual superiority, as if in the moral and spiritual levels men were subordinate to women. Women who follow *marianismo* have the capacity for sacrifice, are disciplined, and morally reasonable if not pure. Consequently, we can detect a sort of women’s power (Taylor 1979:13) within Honduran society which is related to their capacity to be superior spiritually, to be pure and reasonable, and to sacrifice for others. This moral power relates to the respect given to the mother’s figure which occupies an important place in Honduran society. The exaltation of the mother can be observed at the institutional, public, and private levels. Many organizations in the country have annual contests to choose the “mother of the year” of the organization or the club. Honduras even has a “national mother” elected once a year. Nevertheless, the criteria used to choose the “mother of Honduras” reflect a change of attitudes. In past years the winner would be selected among women who portrayed self-sacrifice, and followed a traditional role, while in 1998 the election was based on the mother’s curriculum vitae, and the beneficial work she performs for the Honduran community (*La Prensa* 5/9/1998).

Even though changes in the treatment of the “mother” are observable in

Honduran mass media, and a negotiation of women's role is clearly taking place, the "Honduran mother" still maintains her traditional role and serves as moral example for future generations:

The active woman, the woman of today, is the motor that drives society. She is the example for those who are taking their first steps to the future; a woman's motherly tenderness, her abnegation, and the spiritual strength of all women compel her to always give the best. For this reason, the woman of today only uses in her kitchen Clover Brand lard, because she wants for her family more purity, more flavor, more.... (*Radio Satelite Noticiero*, May 1998)

The woman represented in this commercial is supposedly inserted in modernity and social development; yet she is expected to preserve the role society has imposed on her. By reconciling the traditional women's roles with the idea of modernity or "the woman of today" image, the commercials preserve these traditional roles and promote them for contemporary women and for future generations. However, the mother model presents variations according to whether the messages are directed to middle-class urban populations, or people from the countryside. The advertisement seen above follows a pattern directed primarily to urban people. A woman portrayed within a rural context, as it can be inferred from the imitation of accents and dialects, from the musical background, and the selected settings, presents other characteristics:

- Narrator: Why is your husband crying?
- Wife: I punished him because he is sly, he goes after women!
- Husband: Come on my love, give it to me...!
- Narrator: Behave man! And (talking to the woman) what does he want?
- Wife: He wants me to serve him his cup of Oro coffee, which is tasty and gives more cups from a single bag ... but I punished him, I told him!
- Narrator: Yeah, is true that there is nothing like a little cup of Oro coffee!
- Wife: Yeah.. I feel pity for him... Come here my pumpkin, here is your little cup of Oro coffee
- Husband: Come here my beautiful little girl...
- Narrator: Oro coffee, the favorite of housewives!

Source: *Radio Satélite, Noticiero*, May 28, 1998.

In this commercial the woman has the power to punish her husband and to

refuse to give him a cup of coffee. Apparently, she has the authority inside the household and the ability to make the coffee and serve it. The man seems dependent on his wife's will to give him the coffee and without the capability of taking it by himself. The women portrayed in these kinds of commercials are not precisely gentle with their husbands, rather they talk to them as if they were scolding them. In this example, the wife is upset with her husband because he likes to follow other women and for that reason she does not want to give him coffee. At the end she forgives him, he gets what he wants and he has an implicit permission to go on following other women. Men are sometimes represented as children, and their wives as a kind of a mother for them. Women take care of their children-husbands and control them. Clearly, women must have the required maturity and spiritual strength to understand their husbands. Infidelity is part of these child-like, mischievous male attitudes that women must understand and forgive (González fieldnotes, January 1999).

Men's and children's dependency on their wives-mothers is also made explicit in commercials in which they eat when the mother gives them the meal, they drink if she provides a beverage, and they take their medicines if she is there to make a diagnosis and provide it to them.

However, both the middle-class urban mother and the rural, scolding mother are tied to the household and to other people's needs in ways that indicate that women's own lives lie in their ability to take care of others.

The beauty model: the bad woman

The mother's model opposes another representation for women portrayed in mass media in the country, woman as a beauty model, or as sex symbol. Although the sex symbol representation did not appear in the advertisements of radio programs I analyzed, it is prevalent in newspapers and television as well as in graphic advertisements. The television, newspapers, and magazines in Honduras have more urban audiences. Beauty products' advertisements that use women's images make more sense for people in the cities or from middle-upper classes.

The beauty model encompasses images ranging from the “typical” girl in a bikini, to the use of physical images of women to advertise imported beauty products to an audience which in its majority can not afford them. Also, beauty products go together with the imposition by the media of beauty prototypes coming mainly from industrialized, developed countries which many Honduran women attempt to copy.

Most advertisements portraying the beauty model attempt to manipulate women to follow this model and to buy the products advertised. However, they are also designed to manipulate men, as in the case of a billboard advertisement for tires one can see along the highways of Honduras. Laying beside the tire is a woman in a bikini. She is not even touching the tire, her role is only to catch the attention of drivers who are on the road. Other examples of this include the use of women to advertise cigarettes and beer.

Women’s sexual images are also used for political propaganda, as expressed by Norsworthy and Barry (1994:127): “The daily newspapers feature pin-ups to help sales, and the political parties show seminude women dancing to help promote their candidates.” Supermarkets also promote their products by presenting shows of women and men dancing the popular Garífuna dance *punta* adapted to the *mestizo* culture, and highlighting its sensual components.

The sexy beauty model is powerful for audiences of young-middle and upper-class women who want to copy the stereotypes. Miss Honduras and other beauty contests portray this image of women. For instance, one Honduran newspaper (*La Prensa*, January 1999) ((Figure 4), said this about the election of the “best legs and body” of all “Miss Honduras” contestants:

The elegant participants brought pleasure to the masculine audience which had the opportunity to choose their favorite one according to their own particular taste.

On the other hand, soap operas on television portray the image of the beautiful young, innocent woman who conquers the rich man who saves her from poverty. Women’s beauty and weakness then, are strategies that sometimes help them to obtain



Ante escaso público:

Eligen "Mejores Piernas y Silueta" del Señorita Honduras Continente Americano



Durante su segunda intervención las jóvenes posaron en traje de baño de dos piezas.



El colorido estuvo presente durante la velada que protagonizaron las concursantes al Señorita Honduras Continente Americano.



Las aspirantes al título de "Mejores Piernas y Silueta", cerraron su participación luciendo piezas deportivas.

A ritmo de variados ritmos modernos y calurosas ovaciones del público asistente, el jueves 14 de enero tuvo lugar en Alejandro's Discotec, del Bulevar Morazán la elección de "Las Mejores Piernas y Silueta" del Señorita Honduras Continente Americano.

El evento inició alrededor de las diez treinta de la noche con las palabras de bienvenida que el juvenil locutor Cristian "El Huracán" de Power F.M., ofreció a los asistentes, jurado calificador, candidatas participantes, patrocinadores del evento y público en general.

Las aspirantes al título de Mejores Piernas y Silueta del evento, realizaron tres desfiles por la pasarela, primero en trajes de baño de una y dos piezas y luego una presentación en ropa deportiva.

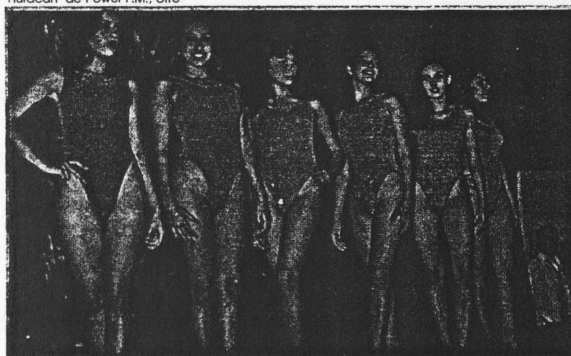
Durante unas dos horas los asistentes al evento disfrutaron

además del desfile de pasarela, de la presentación de roqueros capitalinos y la variada coreografía de un grupo de baile.

Al final de la noche, los organizadores anunciaron que el próximo 30 de enero, en el Centro Comercial Plaza Milenium, se darán a conocer los nombres de las ganadoras junto a la que resulte electa Señorita Honduras Continente Americano.



La aspirante por el departamento de Cortés, una de las más aclamadas por el público, recorre la pasarela ante la prensa y el jurado calificador.



Las participantes abrieron el desfile en traje de baño de una pieza.



Espigadas concursantes hicieron el desfile del público masculino, que tuvo la oportunidad de escoger a su favorita según su propio gusto.

El próximo 30 de enero en Plaza Milenium se dará a conocer el nombre de las ganadoras, junto a la que resulte electa Señorita Honduras Continente Americano.

Figure 4
La Prensa, January 1999
Election of the best "legs and body"
Miss Honduras Beauty Contest

the resources they need from men.

The images of women as sex symbols contribute to create a kind of “meat market syndrome” and the competition between women for one resource: men. However, if a woman in real life adopts this model, society will judge her as a person of questionable moral values or as a “bad woman.”

According to Norsworthy and Barry (1994:127), in a society pervaded by *machismo*, “women are often regarded as little more than sexual prey and cheap labor.” Sometimes almost every relation between a man and a woman is identified within sexual terms--a relation in which women are the temptation and men are the tempted victims of female’s bodies. Rina Villars (1999:55) illustrates this idea by analyzing two satiric caricatures that appeared in Honduran newspapers in 1993 (Figures 5 and 6). Villars (1999:56-61) points out that these caricatures are based on several false assumptions: women being the protagonists of promiscuity and the propagation of AIDS; men, seduced by women, being the sole victims of AIDS. Women’s seductive power is symbolized through a female’s voluptuous seminude body, long hair and a violin, the traditional musical instrument of seduction. In the second caricature (Figure 6) Villars finds that women and AIDS are represented as comprising the same entity; women are the instruments, and AIDS is the evil, thus, women are the instruments of evil. Men are the victims, and like Adam, are prompted by women to sin.

As pointed out by Tseayo (1996:55) in Nigeria, where the media have also linked women with AIDS: “relentlessly, the editorials, cartoons, and news analyses have directly, and indirectly harassed women to the extent that, the word AIDS is synonymous with any other sexually transmitted disease which women are said to acquire from indiscriminate choice of sex partners, and transfer to lovers and husbands.”

In conclusion, the analysis of radio commercials, the representations in other Honduran mass media, and social images, illustrate the polarization of women’s images into a binary opposition of good and bad. Julie Taylor (1979:13) in her analysis



Figures 5 and 6
Caricatures, AIDS and Feminine Subordination
Antología Entre Amigas (1992-1997)

of Eva Perón in Argentina, points out that “both the precarious control which civilization exercises over her biological and sexual nature and her anomalous position in the interstices of society trap woman in an ambiguous state where she provides a major focus for central cultural ideas of purity and pollution.” Without necessary restrictions women become sources of pollution and when constrained by their culture’s rules and regulations, they become important symbols of purity. This idea can be related to Villars’ analysis of the representations of women as sources of pollution, in this case of AIDS and its consequences. The symbol of purity can be seen in the representations of the mother, and its opposite in the sexual beauty model. Such ideas can be also related to Octavio Paz’s (1962) *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, when referred to the antagonism in Mexican identity between the female images of *La Malinche* and *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, who oppose each other as the good and the bad women, but are also part of the same whole.

The models identified above are related to what Taylor (1979:13) identifies as general types of sources of female power: (1) Through the manipulation of their domestic position; (2) threatening men by exerting power over them as incarnations of evil and pollution, or, as incarnations of purity, and (3) assuming masculine roles, entering the world of men, and competing with men on their terms. This last issue will be addressed when analyzing the content of news programs.

The Ideal Man

In the same way mass media create or respond to ideals for women it does so for men. In the radio advertisements analyzed, men’s energy is highlighted. Men’s energy is needed for them to be the right household providers, to respond efficiently to life, and to be prepared sexually. Men’s energy is increased with products like *Nervoforza* or *Ferrohierro*.¹⁹ One radio advertisement presents a woman who complains to her husband about his lack of sexual interest for her. He responds that he already is taking the advertised product that will provide him with the necessary

¹⁹ *Nervoforza* and *ferrohierro* are vitaminized syrups

strength (HRN, July 1998).

Men's advertisements normally highlight men's capacity for work, his ability to produce, to respond to risky situations, to make the right decisions at the appropriate moment, to be the country's and the family's providers. Society and women demand energy from men. In the same way that the "perfect mother" ideal might be overwhelming for "normal" women, this ideal for men can be difficult to achieve.

Nationality and Gender

Both men, and women are used to portray nationalistic ideals. The representation of Honduran nationalism by portraying Honduras as a "land of men" is shown in the following example:

Honduras, land of men... men who fight to sustain their families and Honduran development in the production of rice, beans, melons, African palm, pineapples, bananas and more. In *Camosa*, we believe in our land and in our people, and that is why we offer you our line of "John Deere" trucks.... *Camosa* and John Deere, creating productive forces (*HRN*, May-July 1998).

In this example, we observe the connection between the ideas of men, nationality, development, production, and technology--realms which exclude women. This message is also contributing to the preservation of the Honduran myth regarding who maintains the family and the households. While traditional conceptions of the role of woman as a housewife and mother predominate in Honduras, widespread poverty and irresponsible fatherhood mean women must bring income into the household (Peckenham and Street 1986:5). This message also excludes women from the agricultural production, when in reality they do participate in that process.

This contradiction between symbolism and the real facts can be related to Strathern's (1981:167) idea of the bias in the symbolic order. Strathern points out that "a closer look at the interaction between men and women is likely to reveal only the organizational impact of people's models. The models themselves are constructed at a distance from behavior." Strathern remarks that we should not simply reproduce

people's own symbols in our analysis of events and behavior.

Women in Honduras are also represented as the reproducers of tradition, as seen in the commercial already cited, in which women, by taking care of the children are the mothers and custodians of the nation.

The nationalistic-ethnic, and historic views of women are illustrated in some representations of Honduras as a female country. This started with the Independence of Honduras in 1821 and the images of the conquest and the indigenous past. The national anthem portrays Honduras as a virgin Indian who was asleep over a gold land surrounded by the sea. The "intrepid" sailor finds this "virgin" and the conquest starts, or the mixing between the passive (sleeping) female Indians and the active Spanish conquerors. This idea can be related to the national romances or the relationship between romance and the national foundations in Latin America (Sommer 1991:ix) in the 19th century. Sommer (1991:6) focuses on an analysis of romantic novels in Latin America to show how the national ideals therein are grounded in "natural" heterosexual love and in marriages that provided a symbolism for apparent nonviolent consolidation during mid 19th century conflicts. Romantic passion gave a rhetoric for hegemonic projects, conquering the antagonist through mutual interest, or "love" rather than through coercion. Eroticism and nationalism in Latin America became figures for each other in modernizing fictions (Sommer 1991:31). In the Honduran anthem, the Spanish male and the Indian female consummate their union with "a love kiss" and not through struggle. The racial and cultural mixing and formation of the new society was in this way accepted and projected to the future of the nation.

This image seems prevalent in the representation of Honduras. Recently, when hurricane Mitch hit Honduras, the country was also represented in the newspaper as a woman receiving international aid from men's hands, bashful yet coquettish (*La Tribuna* 1998) (Figure 7). However, these representations clash with the reality for women, and especially for indigenous women, who are also victims of ethnic discrimination.

In conclusion, the symbolism that relates ideas of tradition or nationality to

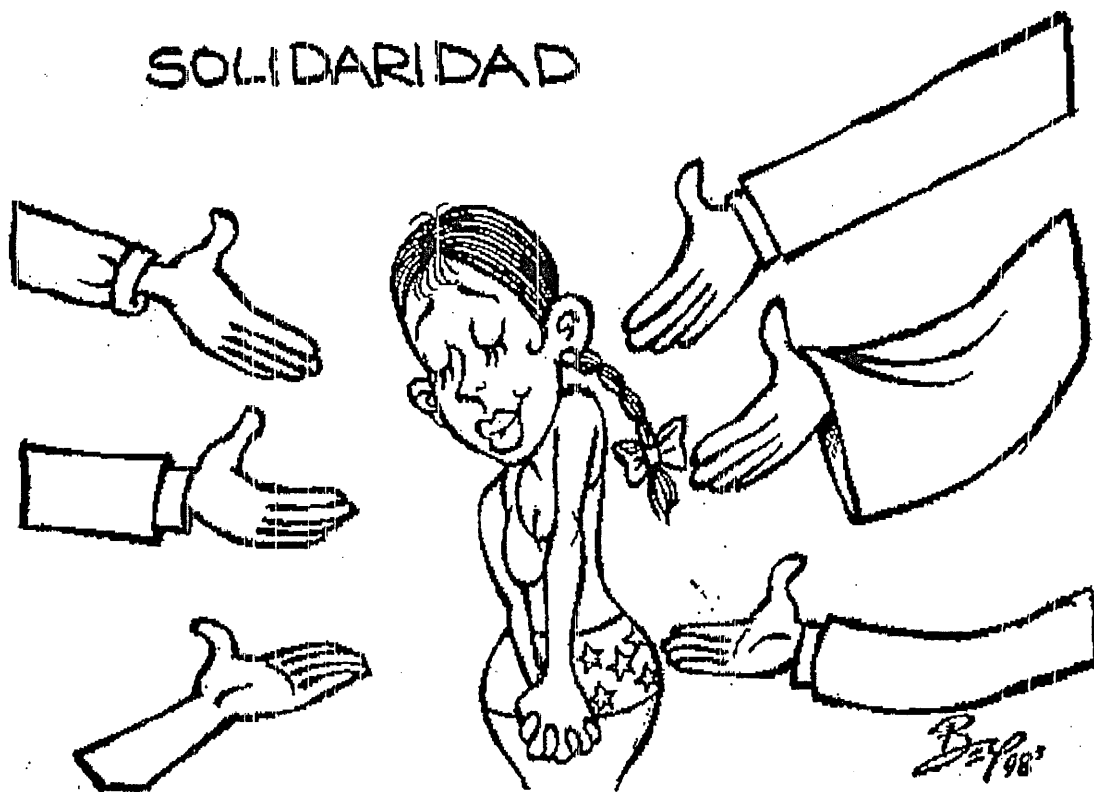


Figure 7
Honduras portrayed as a woman receiving international aid
La Tribuna, 1998.

men highlights their productive role as the ones in charge of the material support of their families and, consequently, of the country. Women are represented as the mothers, the transmitters of tradition and spiritual values to their families and the responsible ones for covering the needs inside their households. Although these symbolic representations have a certain correspondence with the organization of Honduran society, the actual roles for men and women go beyond the ideal set for them. In the cities and the countryside, women are inserted in economic activities . whether formal or informal, in political life and in many cases are the heads of the households. On the other hand, men sometimes are not fulfilling the role of the ideal providers of the house, and in some ways they even try to escape from that responsibility.

The analysis of the programs' content will provide more insight into these issues.

Radio Programs Content

1. News Broadcasts

For the analysis of news I recorded 18 broadcasts from *Radio America*, *HRN*, *Radio Reloj*, *Radio Satélite*, and *Radio Católica*, presented between May and August 1998. All of these programs are transmitted to most of the national territory, and are among the most listened to, both in the cities and in the countryside.

As stated before, all of the news programs analyzed have commercial advertisements. *BS Noticias*, on the Catholic station, does not permit political messages although it accepts selected commercial advertisements.

To identify gender representations in the news, I reviewed a total of 166 news items considering those that addressed women or men in an explicit way by calling their attention or by mentioning the name of a woman or a man who were responsible for the action. I also identified the category "neutral" to categorize those news items in which the action referred to a collectivity, or an abstract issue, without specifying gender in an explicit way. However, as expressed by Tseayo in her work about

women's images in Nigerian mass media (1996:46-61), "there are no neutral media. Editorial decisions on what constitutes "news" and how information shall be presented reflect the interests and values of the dominant culture..., " and even in those "neutral" news we can identify gender stereotypes reflected in the voices used, the settings, or the music.

Table 4.4. shows the situation of women/men representations in the programs analyzed. The majority of the news items (45%) entered the "neutral" category, although with a further analysis of qualitative audience responses they might be associated with a particular gender, 39% of the news items referred to men, and 16% to women. Women were thus, the less mentioned in the news. Different than the Nigerian situation where women are supposed to be "virtually absent" (Tseayo 1996:54), in Honduras they are present in the news but not as frequently as men.

Table 4.4.
News Content and Gender in
Honduran Radio Programs

Radio Station	News that explicitly address women	News that explicitly address men	Neutral news	Total
<i>La Voz de Honduras (HRN)</i>	10	27	13	50
<i>Radio America</i>	10	27	55	91
Other stations	6	11	7	24
Total	26 (16%)	65 (39%)	75 (45%)	166 (100%)

Source: Radio Programs Content analysis, July 1999

However, when considering the quality of women's participation we see that they play an important role, and, when mentioned, their involvement in relevant positions in Honduran society and government is made clear (Table 4.5.).

In Honduras, the news focus on national political events, on governmental

situations and decisions, and on the economic situation of the country, while other subjects seem to be secondary. Women are then inserted into the news in the following particular situations:

- a) When women are in power positions and move in the political world in which the news reporters are interested.
- b) Ordinary women represented in the following ways:
 - ◆ Through development projects for women such as maternity bonus, aid to women's groups, or in reproductive health initiatives
 - ◆ As victims of aggression and violence
 - ◆ Through their roles as housemakers and mothers: protesting for the lack of maternal assistance and care, or addressing housewives for particular matters.

Men were more frequently addressed when discussing politics (political campaigns, struggles within political parties), the legal system²⁰--appearing as the aggressors in a significant amount of cases-- and within the educational official system. Women were mentioned more frequently when the programs addressed education, the legal system--appearing normally as the victims of aggressions-- maternity and human rights. Also, women were more often referred to than men in subjects such as violence--as the victims of it, issues related to health, and social problems,²¹ and as homemakers. Women did not appear in subjects such as environment, army, agriculture, infrastructure, and police matters.

One important issue to take into account when analyzing the quality of women's participation in the news programing is that presently many more women occupy high and middle positions in the government than in previous administrations. Even though women are underrepresented in some areas, the role of those included is relevant as they appear as the heads of important institutions and in charge of taking

²⁰ The "Legal System" refers to crime news, delinquency, violence, arrests, and court cases (Stone 1993:382).

²¹ Sex workers had a struggle with their neighbors and the municipality was acting as a mediator during the days of the program's recordings.

Table 4.5.
Subjects and Gender in Radio News
Honduran Radio Programs

Subject	Gender		Total News
	Women	Men	
Politics	1	11	12
Legal System	3	9	12
Environment	0	10	10
Education	5	5	10
Human Rights and repression in the 1980s	1	5	6
Human Rights	2	2	5
Health/maternity	3	1	4
Economy	1	3	4
Army	0	4	4
Violence	2	1	3
Sex	2	1	3
Health	1	2	3
Agriculture	0	3	3
Bureaucracy	1	2	3
Infrastructure	0	2	2
Violence/army/economy	0	1	1
Housewives	1	0	1
Food's official control	1	0	1
Public administration	1	0	1
Death notices	0	1	1
Police	0	1	1
Total	26	65	91

Source: Radio Programs Content analysis, July 1999

major decisions in the country. For instance, 57.6% of the news items that address women refer to them as occupying high or middle positions in the government or in non governmental organizations and foundations, 38.4% refer to them as occupying an important position in the government's administration, while the 19.2% refers to women in middle positions in non-governmental or human rights organizations.

For example, in terms of education men and women were even in numbers, but women mentioned occupied higher positions at the National University (Interview to the Chancellor of the Honduran National University, Ana Belén Castillo, *HRN*, May 1998), while the men interviewed were in middle positions. While women were mentioned less frequently than men in financial issues, the Minister of Finance in Honduras is currently a woman. In the news items that mentioned this woman, she represented more power than the men mentioned (Interview with the Minister of Finance, Gabriela Núñez, *HRN*, May 1998). A similar situation exists in the fight against corruption as the head of the corresponding office is also a woman. Of course, this does not mean that more women than men occupy positions of power, they are not even paralleled, but it means that there is a percentage of women represented in those levels.

Women's Misrepresentation and Omission

Considering that advertisements respond to ideals rather than to the reality of men and women in Honduras, we can say that there is a considerable degree of misrepresentation. Although men and women are both misrepresented, the control of the radio is actually in men's hands. This is demonstrated by the fact that the majority of stations belong to men, they are the main heads in radio programs, and because the amount of women who manage their own programs is smaller (González, González interviews, June 1999).

As Michael Parenti (1993:192) points out, the most common form of misrepresentation is omission, which sometimes involves deliberate decisions. These decisions work in almost an automatic way when they have been practiced for a long

time and are influenced by the dominant political culture. Honduran men rule most of the political life and are in charge of most economic decisions. In a great part, Honduran news reporting is dominated by male reporters who broadcast what is important to them. Even when a female reporter is in charge, she will normally transmit information that is relevant for the program as a whole. The radio news analyzed focus particularly on news about the political and economic life of the nation, as well as current social events, deaths, tragedies, and international matters, and reflect society's structure. Even though there are some women in the country who work in politics and are involved in economic decisions, these issues are still dominated by men, and this fact is reflected in the mass media. Interviews with male politicians are one of the most important parts of these news broadcasts.

Advertisements are also male centered. Women in commercials are relegated to household activities, while men appear in charge of production, technology, investment, infrastructure, and financial matters.

Another kind of omission and misrepresentation refers to the limited cultural diversity perspective transmitted by the radio programs, that broadcast ideas from the city, including the stereotypes about rural populations. Ethnic groups are included in the daily news when they constitute the "news of the day." The mass media tend to homogenize the population according to the *mestizo* dominant group. Cultural diversity is thus represented in the way of documentaries or short videos. On the radio, the subject is included when the ethnic groups are in the "news" or in special programs such as *Estamos a Tiempo*,²² or *Contrapunto*²³ which focus in local communities.

Women from ethnic groups are rarely taken into account as having particular

²² *Estamos a Tiempo* is a news magazine presented in *Radio América* from which I obtained an episode referring to the project for the protection of the *Río Plátano* reserve in *La Mosquitia*, including interviews with local leaders involved in the project.

²³ *Contrapunto* is a news magazine focused on local issues. The episode I recorded documented the situation of the population in Copán including the different social groups that were working towards the development of the community, and the "vulnerable" sectors such as children in the streets, the Chortí ethnic group and their struggles for land, educational problems in the municipality, sanitation, etc. The program addresses all these matters through interviews with local people.

characteristics and problems. However, the inclusion of a cultural diverse perspective is increasing in Honduras in the last years.

Socially-concerned messages in radio

The general programing of *Radio América* and *HRN* include messages directed to create consciousness about certain issues among the population. These messages are produced mainly by the human rights associations in the country, or by governmental institutions, referring mainly to issues like violence, human rights, environmental protection, or democracy building.

The messages produced by *El Comisionado de los Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights commission) (Figure 8) for instance, portray an equal role for men and women, and incorporate gender in language. Normally a woman starts the message, followed by a man who reaffirms what she expressed, and sometimes it includes some radio theater at the beginning. The following is an example of this kind of messages:


Man: Doctor is killed..., witness is murdered...!
Woman: Lets not pass on violence to our children. The only hope for not being victims in the future is to respect the law and others' rights. Man: Justice, a commitment for all men and women.

*Proyecto de Fortalecimiento del Estado Democrático de Derecho,
Comisionado de Derechos Humanos.*

Source: *Noticiero El Minuto de Radio América*, Tegucigalpa, July 8, 1998.

The construction of a democratic state *or estado de derecho* is a prevalent message in the radio stations mentioned. These kinds of messages that appear in the current Honduran media constitute openings to new perspectives that might benefit groups that have been marginalized in the past, as is the case for women. Ecological programs that provide new ideas concerning the relations between humans and their environment are also appearing in radio.

In conclusion, radio programs present openings for alternative messages that compete with messages promoting traditional gender images and roles.



sabía usted
que...en la
RADIO
también
estamos

**"EN
MARCHA
POR LA
VIDA"**

*La radio revista
semanal del CODEH
con información y
educación.*

*Esperé más detalles en
nuestro próximo Boletín,
sobre el lugar, día, hora y
emisoras en que se
transmite este programa.*

Figure 8
Advertisement for the Human Rights Commission's Radio Program
"En Marcha por la Vida"
Boletín CODEH, 1991.

For instance, an advertisement that presents traditional gender roles such as the mother-housemaker for women, and the productive, strong image of men, might appear along with a message that includes gender in language and pledges for a non-violent society. There is thus not a binary opposition between traditional and alternative programs as such, since alternative images are constantly being inserted into the general media. This reflects the fact that change seems to be actually taking place in the perception of gender roles in Honduras.

Chapter 5 will provide a clearer idea of the current performance of women's alternative radio programs in Honduras.

Negotiating Gender Identities in Honduras: The Contribution of Women's Radio Programs

As seen in the previous chapter, the use of ideal stereotypes to portray gender in mass media seems prevalent not only in Honduras, but also in other countries. The efforts undertaken by women, and feminist organizations to counter the traditional gender models are also present in the different countries. As Helen Safa (1995:238) expresses, Latin American women are attempting to establish a new relationship with the state, not based on subordination, control, and dependency, but on rights, autonomy, and equality. The issue is not just one of women's incorporation into a male defined world but one of transforming this world to do away with the hierarchies of class, gender, race, and ethnicity that have subordinated much of Latin American's population, male, and female (Kirkwood 1986:65).

One way in which women contest traditional gender relations is through the representation in mass media of new models for these relations. I refer to the new ways of representation as "alternative images" that promote novel portrayals of society. Spitulnik (1993b:305) refers to independent, alternative, or decentralized media production and consumption. According to Spitulnik, the existence of alternative media forms and practices is determined in relation to the dominant, "legitimate" media in the societies where they occur. The challenge in studying alternative media forms will be to locate their production, use, interpretation, and circulation within the larger context of available media forms (Spitulnik 1993b:306). I understand women's radio programs in Honduras as "alternative" media forms that function within the broader context of patriarchal society and the dominant media in the country. Alternative programs resist the "traditional"--dominant--gender roles and stereotypes.

Patriarchal notions of womanhood, portrayed in traditional representations are subject to change: they are resisted by feminist groups using alternative messages and images. The comparison of alternative and traditional gender images that appear in

media forms highlights the nature of gender negotiation in contemporary Honduran society.

By analyzing how society's ideas of women are portrayed in the mass media, we are able to identify primary images of gender representations in Honduran society. We can uncover the roles society assigns to each gender and understand how their membership in the community and in the family is defined.

To understand the strategies that contest traditional gender representations in the Honduran media, one has to be aware of the customary ideas concerning different genders, as well as the power relations accompanying gender identities. Alternative perspectives that contest traditional gender stereotypes in Honduran mass media provide new ideas for social interactions. They can lead to the conceptualization of a new social model and, thus, the re-invention of traditional gender relations. As pointed out by Allan Hanson (1997:195), analysis of the "invention of tradition" illustrates that "tradition" and "culture" are not fixed and static things that get passed through the generations in unchanging form. Instead, they are constantly redefined and reformulated. This idea can be related to the reconceptualization of the social understanding of gender roles in Honduras. Even though in Honduras exists a socio-historical structure that informs and manipulates gender relations, women's organizations have found elements that permit them to create an alternative model of society that matches in a better way with women's interests. Women's organizations attempt to construct new identities for women and men at the individual and collective levels.

To illustrate my discussion of alternative radio programs I pursued an in-depth analysis²⁴ of the program "*Tiempo de Hablar*," developed by the women's organization *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres*. Some of the *Tiempo de Hablar* programs are devoted to analyze women's individual and collective identities. To illustrate a program about women's identity *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers include a

²⁴ The analysis of *Tiempo de Hablar* was based on the programs' content, on interviews with the producers, and the interviews with potential listeners. See Chapter two for more methodological details.

song that refers to the need to end with the traditional gender stereotypes:

Cuando estabamos pequeñitas solíamos escuchar consejos para señoritas, al futuro implementar. Que quiere usted materinerinero, que quiere usted materinerinero.... Ya no vamos a callar, de la ciencia y el descanso vamos a gozar, estereotipo fuera del paso vamos a gritar. Mamá amasa la masa, mientras papá lee el periódico... A ella regalos para la casa y a él un juego electrónico. Ella barre y limpia con incómodo tacón y él descansa del trabajo en un cómodo sillón.... El es astuto y fuerte como papá, ella dulce y delicada como mamá.... El es inteligente y valiente, ella callada y muy inocente.... Ya no vamos a callar... (PRO 46-98, 7/22/98).

In light of the deterritorialization of culture (Gupta and Ferguson 1997), the study of women's media acquires a relevant position, particularly in terms of how it helps to explain women's subordination in most societies worldwide. Women's alternative media transcends national, regional, and local borders. It has the potential to help forge new gender identities uniting women's beyond their particular geographical location. Media forms are critical in the establishment of collective identities and solidarities among women and men. Analysis of Honduran women's radio programs provides, in a broader context, insight into the dynamic relationship that exists between social movements and the mass media (Stone 1993:378).

Alternative Media in Honduras

My data show that in Honduras women organizations, developmental and international agencies, ethnic federations, and non governmental organizations, grassroots movements, and certain groups within governmental institutions, are challenging the dominant social models. They are attempting to find alternatives, paths of development that lead to justice, equality, and participation for all social sectors of society.

Initiatives aimed at health promotion illustrate this. For example, the United Nations in Honduras, through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), is concerned about the uncontrolled spread of AIDS in the country. Lately, one program, sponsored by the UN, is trying to raise awareness in people about risky

behaviors. Specialists in social communication are working towards the inclusion of messages in the media designed to control the spread of AIDS. Radio programs, newspapers, magazines, formal education and television are being used for this purpose. The chosen strategy of this project was to present peoples' attitudes towards life, and not a discourse about AIDS itself. Within this framework, the UNDP produced a movie in 1998, in which gender relations, sexual life, and other attitudes of Honduran society were portrayed. Research took place among people in neighborhoods in Tegucigalpa to write the script according to culturally appropriate themes. Consequently, the movie includes "real" stories that came from culturally sensitive research. The purpose of the UN media project is to heighten people's awareness of the consequences of their behaviors (Estrada, personal communication, Tegucigalpa, January 1999).

Several other programs have been developed in Honduras using radio programs to educate, to create increased awareness about particular issues. Radio has been used for health campaigns, literacy campaigns, and to promote development projects (Wilkins 1999:57, 59; Kendall et al. 1987; Yudelman 1987).

Within this context, women organizations in Honduras are trying to reevaluate women's role in society by encouraging respect and a climate of nonviolence in the family, community, and nation. They are trying to get rid of patriarchal, sexist, and mythical symbolism that manipulates women's images. Although some men are also involved in projects aimed at the betterment of society related to gender relations and women's situation, their involvement is still weak. Some men are conforming "masculinity" groups where they discuss issues such as masculine identity and the search for a new ideal for men different than the "macho." The programs I obtained from *Tiempo de Hablar* did not address homosexuality.

Women's situation in Honduras has been addressed in previous chapters. Norsworthy and Barry (1994:127) provide statistics to illustrate the situation of women in Honduran society. They point out the 44% of children in primary school are female, and about 40% of Honduran women have received no schooling. Only 25% of

women graduate from high school and university. Only 25% of the paid work force is female, although almost half of all children are born to households headed by single mothers. Regarding women's insertion in formal politics, Norsworthy and Barry note that in the 1989 elections, women occupied 9.4% of seats in Congress and 6.2% of all mayorships.

Since the first women organizations²⁵ appeared in the country in the first half of the 20th century, their members have tried to use the mass media to transmit their perspectives—they have used radio and the publication of magazines to further their cause. *Tiempo de Hablar* is part of this perspective, adapted to the context and social of the Honduran reality in the 1990s.

The Production of Tiempo de Hablar

The radio program *Tiempo de Hablar* (Figure 9) is produced by the non governmental organization *Centro de Derechos de las Mujeres* (CDM) which is based in Tegucigalpa. The CDM started a radio program designed to reach the broadest audiences, taking into consideration that many women in Honduras receive information from outside their communities only through listening to radio. Since 1994 the CDM has been broadcasting on radio *America* station, one of the main stations in the country. *Tiempo de Hablar* has been sponsored by international development agencies, such as the Spanish *Manos Unidas*, the United Nations, and the Canadian Cooperation. Being a fully sponsored program, *Tiempo de Hablar* does not include commercial advertisements. Although European and Canadian agencies are sponsoring the program, these agencies have not gotten involved in the conception, and the design of it (Fonseca, Miselén, González interviews, July 1998). This is carried out by the program's Honduran producers. The production of the radio program *Tiempo de*

²⁵ One of the theoretical problems that has been addressed in the last decades (1970-80) is to differentiate the concepts of "feminist movement" and "women's organizations." In Latin America and other non-industrialized countries, both concepts converge in gender vindications, social solidarity, or charity (Milla 1998). Women's movements are those that are based on a predominantly feminine membership, regardless of their vindications. The feminist movements endeavor for gender equity, women's improvement, and they denounce women's subordination in society (de Barbieri 1986).

Para que no
se me olvide...!

Tiempo de hablar

Un programa hecho
por mujeres para mujeres

Viernes a las 3:00 p.m.
Domingos a las 10:00 a.m.

Invita el Centro de Derechos de Mujeres / CDM
Apartado Postal 4562, Tegucigalpa.

Figure 9
Advertisement of *Tiempo de Hablar* Radio Program
Centro de Derechos de Mujeres

Hablar includes much insight into local Honduran issues, responding to the producers' political engagement towards the cause to promote gender equality in the country (Miselén, González interviews, July 1998).

The producers of *Tiempo de Hablar*, Regina Fonseca, Nora Miselén and Iris Cruz, have extensive experience working with women's issues. They have been involved in the radio program since its first design. Previous to producing the radio program, the *Centro de Derechos de las Mujeres*²⁶ directed its activities to educate women in communal organizations, and in marginal neighborhoods. However, they soon realized that they had a limited audience, and in order to reach women from different social, ethnic, and institutional sectors, and give them the opportunity to participate in the discussion of female issues, the producers came up with the idea of a radio program. *Tiempo de Hablar* was created to educate, to help create the basis for critical reflection, to share women's happiness and frustrations, to propose new projects for women, and to establish women's own perspectives about their particular problems (Miselén, González interviews, January 1999).

Before beginning the production of the program, the CDM carried out a survey among women in poor neighborhoods in Tegucigalpa. Women expressed that they mainly needed information about places to go in case of domestic violence. The producers established the hours in which radio was most listened to by both men and women. They first started broadcasting once a week for half an hour, and they then obtained a program slot consisting of 20 minutes three times a week (Cruz, González interviews, January 1999). At the beginnings the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* were frustrated when they noticed power issues within the radio station. The negotiation of more space and respect within the radio station's world was a slow process (Miselén, González interviews, January 1999).

²⁶ The *Centro de Derechos de las Mujeres* was created after the *Comité Latinoamericano para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer* (CLADEM-Honduras).

The program includes radio theater, testimony, fictitious representations, and interviews. The use of radio theater helps the producers to portray real situations that are dramatized by actors and have the force to seem real (Alfaro et al. 1990:117).

Tiempo de Hablar contests the stereotypes about women promoted by the “traditional” messages in a subtle, strategic way. The main purpose of the program is to increase women’s self-esteem, to make them aware of the trap of patriarchy, and to be able to reflect and make informed decisions. *Tiempo de Hablar* broadcasts information about gender stereotypes, and myths, and invite every woman to step back and consciously think about their social roles (Figure 10). Table 5.1. shows the contents of the programs broadcasted by *Tiempo de Hablar* from 1994 to July 1998.

As expressed by the producer Regina Fonseca (González interviews, August 1998):

Through the program we contribute to the process of construction of a gender identity, of woman’s identity, of women as women.... In that process women reflect about the prevailing values that are seen as natural, as divine virtue, or as God’s gift, as stationary facts, and they start questioning, they start having a critical attitude about those social values that are dominating values.... We want to construct gender identity, as feminine gender.... When a woman feels subject of rights, she can start promoting changes in her personal life, or in her community. We try to empower women, to eliminate this identity of second class citizen, second category, of a subordinated person.

Contesting Gender Stereotypes: Tiempo de Hablar’s Strategies

Following the traditional gender stereotypes that I found in Honduran mass media, the next sections of this thesis develop the analysis of how *Tiempo de Hablar* contests those stereotypes. The analysis is based on the programs’ content and on the ideas expressed by the informants that I interviewed in Tegucigalpa during January, and March 1999. My informants were the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar*, and potential listeners with whom I developed a hypothetical sample to observe their reactions to the

Table 5.1.
Contents of *Tiempo de Hablar* Radio Program, 1994-1998

Subject	No. Of Programs	Subject	No of Programs
Violence	74	Women and organization	4
Women's laws and rights	37	Adolescence	4
Maternity and pregnancy	34	Feminism	3
Health	30	Virginity	3
Identity (gender/sex)	24	Racism	3
Sexuality	21	Prostitution	3
International conventions for women	18	Paternity	3
Self-Esteem	15	Faithfulness/unfaithfulness	2
Goals and aspirations for social change	13	Education and sexual educ.	2
Women and economy	12	Women and language	2
Women and work	11	Depression/emotional probl.	2
Marriage and other kinds of unions	8	Subordination of women	2
Divorce	8	Women in jail	2
Gender relations	7	Adoption	1
Family planing (birth control)	7	Homosexuality	1
Love and love without sex	7	The patriarchy	1
The image of women in media	7	Democracy	1
Discrimination against women	6	Other subjects	17
The family	6		
Dependence, independence and, control	6		
Women and politics	5		
Total programs			412

Source: *Tiempo de Hablar* radio programming, *Centro de Derechos de la Mujer*, Tegucigalpa, August 1998

Qué es eso de **Género**

Cuando pensamos en las cosas que nos hacen diferentes a hombres y mujeres, casi siempre nos vemos así:

Mujer	Hombre
Tierna	Frío
Emotiva	Inexpresivo
Instintiva	Racional
Débil	Fuerte
Llorona	Controlado
Insegura	Seguro
Dependiente	Independiente
Sumisa	Dominante
Fiel	Infel

Figure 10
“Que es eso de Género” (What is Gender?)
Pamphlet, Centro de Derechos de Mujeres.

radio program's ideas.

The representation of the mother: The good woman

The mother's myth for women, portrayed in the mass media, contrasts with the social realism for mothers presented by *Tiempo de Hablar*. First, the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* contest the ideal mother model by expressing that women have to learn how to take care of their children (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98). Motherhood skills are not nature's gifts that all women know by instinct, but something that needs work, patience, and experience:

Women are conditioned to be mothers but are not educated for that purpose (Miselén, PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Different from the ideal mother's model that tends to equalize and generalize mother's identity for all women, in *Tiempo de Hablar* the meaning of being a mother varies depending on each woman's circumstances and particular experiences, age, culture, and economic situation. In a program dedicated to mothers during Mothers Day in 1998, *Tiempo de Hablar* presented various testimonies to illustrate the reality of daily life for mothers in Honduras, as is shown in the following examples:

When I had my first child I did not know how to take care of her, I did not have the experience. I did not know what to do when she got sick, to the point that I lost her because I did not do the right things. Then, I said I was not going to have more children because I was afraid (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Nobody teaches you how to look after a child (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

The ideal mother's characteristics then, for *Tiempo de Hablar* are not self-contained in women just for the fact of being mothers. Mothers will achieve an ideal situation by having the right social-economic conditions, the right couple who helps them to take care of their children, and the commitment of the rest of the community to assume motherhood:

When my daughter was born I felt fulfilled.... Afterwards it became more difficult because I separated from my husband and I realized that it is not the same to raise a child by oneself it is even a greater sacrifice what one does day by day. At the same time I had guilty feelings because I wanted a family, I wanted my daughter to grow up with her father.... But, I had to decide if I wanted my child to live with her father in a violent household or to live peacefully without her father (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

We have been left alone with the responsibility of taking care of children. This is not just because we might not have a male by our side, but also because man has been educated in a different way, as a macho, and thus, with the wrong idea that to be a father is to be responsible only for the household economy, taking upon himself very little responsibility for emotional matters with our children (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Other women take upon themselves maternity with guilty feelings, because their husband abandoned them, and they feel guilty for not having been able to maintain the family. Also because we have the concept of family as structured by the father, the mother and their children (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Tiempo de Hablar's producers then, represent motherhood as a social issue, as something that must be the responsibility of females, males, and the society in general. Furthermore, they contest the monogamous family model as another ideal imposed by the social system, and not the only model to follow. Traditional representations in mass media's advertisements represent women almost exclusively as housewives. *Tiempo de Hablar's* testimonies, however, show how most women sustain a double work day as they work outside the household and bring money into it, and when they return from work they still have to do the domestic work and take care of the children:

You have to run from your job to the house, prepare food for the children, look after them and prepare everything for the next morning (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Nevertheless, these testimonies also show the beauty of motherhood, and the network of solidarity established by women, especially between mother-daughters to help each other taking care of the children and in the household's work:

For me to be a mother is the most beautiful feeling, more than anything else.

When I had my children, my mother was my biggest support, she was always there, close to me. Their father was also there but my biggest help came from my mother (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Equally, *Tiempo de Hablar* presents the idea of the mother who sacrifices herself for others, but in a different way than traditional representations in media advertisements. For *Tiempo de Hablar* mothers' resignation concerns real daily issues, were women face difficult situations. However, the idea of "sacrifice" is not taken to an extreme. Despite all difficulties, being a mother is a gratifying experience:

To be a mother is a gratifying but also a painful experience.... It is difficult to be a mom in these times, and more to be a single mother. But despite that, it has beautiful things and one learns a lot.... It is worth while to live that experience (PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Tiempo de Hablar thus, contests the traditional image of the ideal mother by presenting real experiences and feelings that do not treat the image in an idealistic way, but rather give importance to the fact that being a mother requires work and experience. *Tiempo de Hablar's* social realism applied to the figure of the mother, contrasts with the traditional imagery of motherhood in which women are fulfilled just by being mothers. However, for real women the ideal maternity goes beyond their individual responsibility in relation to their offspring. In the testimonies presented by *Tiempo de Hablar* women refer to the responsibility that society and the community must have with regard to children's care, or the need to "assume motherhood as a social responsibility":

Children's education is not only a mother's responsibility, but is also the father's, the family's and the community's. It is a responsibility for the whole of society, and is in the acceptance of this that we are having problems... (Cruz, PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

We have to fight for the best possible education for our children, from the

household to the state, understanding this responsibility by raising them with a non-sexist conception of gender relations and by disrupting the values that say that the responsibility for children relies on women. We have to fight for maternity to be socially understood... demanding more responsibility from the rest of institutions like the school, the high school, the state, and the church (Miselén, PRO 32-98, 10/5/98).

Tiempo de Hablar's producers also refer to the need to stop the "double morality culture" (Cruz PRO 32-98, 10/5/98) as reflected in the Mother's Day celebration with commercial purposes that glorify the symbolism of mothers without attempting to create better conditions for real women. According to the program's producers (Miselén, and Cruz PRO 32-98, 10/5/98), Mother's Day or Month should be used to reflect and discuss the meaning of motherhood and to find ways to provide better conditions for mothers.

The commercial advertisements representing women cooking or doing housework supports the idea that if women comply with their domestic role they will be rewarded by their husbands and children, who appreciate her job. This will assure family harmony and happiness. Nevertheless, in the testimonies presented by *Tiempo de Hablar* even though women conform to their expected role and behave submissively, they are still subjects of violence and do not necessarily obtain a reward. *Tiempo de Hablar* broadcasts contrast the ideal of "family harmony" presented by the traditional representations in advertisements with real stories that show that the result of following the domestic role for women does not necessary lead to such familial "harmony."

The sexual beauty: violence against the "bad woman"

In traditional representations women are often portrayed as sexual objects, as sources of temptation or potential chaos for men. *Tiempo de Hablar* contests these stereotypes first by presenting real situations where women are not sources of temptation but victims of men's exercise of power and men's misinterpretation of

women's behaviors. The testimonies presented in *Tiempo de Hablar* contest the perspective of women as being the temptresses and suggest that both, men and woman are victims of the traditional system of gender inequities. The ideas that put women as dependent on males, as men's possession, and as sexual objects, give way and justify violent acts against them.

Domestic violence is a predominant subject for *Tiempo de Hablar*, not surprisingly given that domestic violence is a prevalent problem in Honduran families. Many women's organizations in Central America argue that the roots of domestic violence are to be found in the *machismo* grounded in the region's culture (Fauné 1995:129-130). According to this perspective, violence constitutes a positive value, a central component in the construction of the masculine identity. A pattern of violence develops between couples whose relations are structured by a possessor and a possessed. Women and the couple's children are both regarded as a man's belongings. Yet, violence also forms part of women's own conceptions of life, and in some cases, it is assumed as normal in most of women's relations with men, understood as God's punishment or as the way things "simply are."

As pointed out by Fauné (1995:132) in Honduras, rape is the main expression of family violence, and among the relatives, the father is the most frequent aggressor (37%). Sexual abuse and the rape of young girls by male family members and neighbors in Honduras is common, and as Norsworthy and Barry (1994:127) express, in many poor urban neighborhoods "few girls make it beyond their early teens without becoming sexual victims."

Violence is not only directed to women, but it also permeates power relations throughout Honduran society. According to Regina Fonseca from the CDM (Gonzalez interviews: August 1998) since the law against domestic violence was approved by the Honduran Congress in 1997, the *Fiscalia de la Mujer* (Court House for Women) received 1,550 complaints of physical abuse in 1997 and 1,650 from

January to June 1998. It is not surprising then that *Tiempo de Hablar* devotes considerable time to this issue (Figure 11).

Social justifications for violence against women are found in traditional messages and media forms. As pointed out by the *Tiempo de Hablar* producers (Cruz, PRO 95-97, 11/14/97) in the Honduran press news about violence against women normally highlight the fact that the aggressors were under the influence of substances such as alcohol or drugs, are mentally ill, or delinquents:

- Broadcaster is shot by her drugged husband...
- A sexually aberrated man in jail for raping his own daughter
- Drunk gunmen killed minor (PRO 95-97, 11/14/97).

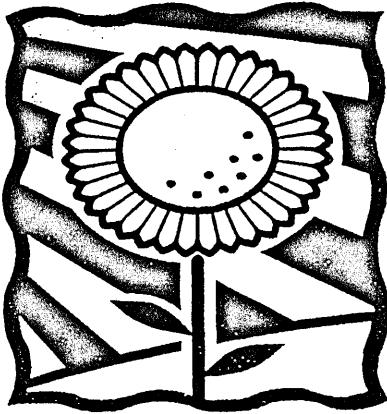
According to *Tiempo de Hablar* these explanations are not valid, as the majority of aggressors are not drug-addicts or alcoholics and violence is really a problem of values, of power, of women's submission, and lack of respect for women. The news' messages analyzed by *Tiempo de Hablar's* producers (PRO 95-97, 11/14/97) also justify males aggressive behavior against women by giving the impression that there are female acts that provoke violent reactions in men:

- Man raped and killed a girl because she insulted him
- Man blinded by jealousy kills his fiancée
- Man kills young woman in a bar because she did not allow him to kiss her
- Woman is wildly beaten by her husband because she did not give him *guaro*²⁷ (PRO 95-97, 11/14/97).

According to *Tiempo de Hablar's* producers, news reports justify violence, and give the appearance that there are reasons for beating and killing women. News reports make it seem as if women themselves provoked the aggression, and as if men were sorts of "irrational beasts" (PRO 95-97, 11/14/97) who are not able to stop when provoked.

²⁷ Guaro: Alcoholic beverage made from sugar cane

Hay salida a la violencia sexual



LA VIOLENCIA SEXUAL CONTRA LAS MUJERES

Muchas mujeres hondureñas han vivido o viven diferentes formas de violencia sexual, es decir que han sido víctimas de actos de carácter sexual que no son bien recibidos ni deseado por ellas.

Estas agresiones no necesariamente van acompañadas de violencia física y en esos casos, casi siempre la víctima se siente culpable o con temor de denunciar.

Hay ocasiones en que las víctimas son niñas o adolescentes y que el agresor es un pariente cercano o una persona conocida que amenaza a la víctima para que calle los hechos.

FORMAS DE VIOLENCIA SEXUAL

Hay varias formas en que se manifiesta la violencia sexual. Algunas de ellas son:

- ⇒ La violación es cuando una mujer se ve obligada a tener relaciones sexuales sin su voluntad. El agresor puede ser una persona conocida o desconocido, incluso el novio o compañero de la víctima.
- ⇒ La violación incestuosa es cuando el agresor es algún familiar de la víctima, la cual es obligada por el agresor a tener relaciones sexuales.
- ⇒ El acoso sexual es cuando el agresor hace insinuaciones o propocisiones irrespetuosas que no son bien recibidas por la víctima y que ofenden su pudor.
- ⇒ Los actos de lujuria son todo tipo de agresiones sexuales en los cuales no hay penetración del pene por la vagina o el ano, pero si cualquier otra forma de abuso, como tocamientos o introducción de objetos fálicos por la vagina o por el ano.

Usted debe denunciar cualquier forma de violencia sexual contra mujeres y niñas.

Figure 11
“Hay Salida a la Violencia Sexual”
(There is a way out from Sexual Violence)
Centro de Derechos de Mujeres

To defend women from violence, women's organizations have fought for the approval of the law against domestic violence. They are also fighting for the inclusion of laws that help women to deal with issues such as divorce, separation, children's custody, and alimony. *Tiempo de Hablar* producers also dedicate a number of programs to the subject of laws and rights that favor the protection of women rights. In many cases this is related to domestic violence, particularly how women can defend themselves legally. The radio program's producers also transmit information regarding irresponsible fatherhood, children's custody, and problems associated with divorce.

Reactions to a *Tiempo de Hablar*'s episode about domestic violence

Given the importance of the topic of violence in *Tiempo de Hablar*'s programming, I evaluated listeners' reactions to women's alternative media, specifically regarding the issue of domestic violence. To be able to grasp how different people, according to their age, gender, educational level, and social condition, accepted or resisted women's alternative discourse, I conducted interviews in Tegucigalpa, recording informants' reactions to a *Tiempo de Hablar* episode about domestic violence. I asked people of different ages and genders to listen to this particular episode (PRO 79-97, 10/19/97).²⁸

Tiempo de Hablar's program about domestic violence (PRO 79-97, 10/19/97) highlights the need to understand domestic violence as a social problem, and not as something particular to certain people with special social-economic characteristics. In this episode, *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers emphasize that domestic violence is a problem that concerns men and women, children, the state, legislators, the church, secular people, civilian and military (Cruz, PRO 79-97, 10/19/97). This episode starts by providing a definition of domestic violence:

Domestic violence is any kind of emotional, physical, sexual, or economical aggression pursued by a man with whom a woman currently lives or with whom she had a past relationship, and with whom this woman might have children or

²⁸ See chapter two for more details about the methodology.

not (Cruz, PRO 79-97, 10/19/97).

This definition provided by the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* which points to the male being the aggressor and the female the victim, relates to the gendered education people normally receive from most Honduran institutions: the family, school, and mass media. Men are educated to dominate, to control others, to be violent, and normally in matrimonial relations the man is the one who exercises physical, psychological, economical, and/or sexual violence against the woman (Cruz, PRO 79-97, 10/19/97). *Tiempo de Hablar* producers express that as women's education also favors the patriarchal pattern, sometimes it is difficult for women to recognize that they are actual victims of domestic violence. Especially when violence is manifested psychologically, sexually or in economic terms, women tend to accept that they are guilty of creating problems within the couple, that it is their duty to sexually satisfy their male partners, and that the economic power lies with men (Cruz, and Miselén, PRO 79-97, 10/19/97). Through psychological violence women's self-esteem decreases, some women start feeling anxious or depressed, and sometimes they develop psycho-somatic illnesses. The program *El Consultorio del Aire*²⁹ broadcasted on HRN radio station gives an idea about the existence of psycho-somatic conditions in many women across Honduras. *El Consultorio del Aire* is devoted to people calling and asking medical questions. In the three programs from the *Consultorio del Aire* analyzed for this thesis most people calling into the program were women, and most of them had symptoms of psycho-somatic illnesses that were diagnosed by the doctor (*El Consultorio del Aire*, HRN, June-July 1998) as depression.

The *Tiempo de Hablar* episode about domestic violence also defines what is *Violencia de Género*, or gendered violence, as a kind of violence against women based on their gender. The program describes how this type of violence exists in the domestic sphere, as well as in the public domain. *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers explain that at the private level a cycle of violence exists where the aggressor starts by

²⁹ Your Doctor's Advice on the Air

getting upset and blaming the woman for his problems, then shouting and often destroying the material goods, until the moment of crisis when he directly attacks his wife through beating and humiliating her. After the crisis the cycle closes with the period of the husband's regret and his wife's forgiveness, until the cycle of violence starts again. The alternative proposed by *Tiempo de Hablar* to this situation is breaking the cycle of domestic violence, by highlighting the battered wife's need to find help outside the home, thus doing away with the belief that this type of violence is simply a private issue (PRO 79-97, 10/19/97). The program also takes into account that it is not an easy task to end the cycle of violence. To illustrate this situation they present a testimony in which a woman complains about the struggle she endured to be able to end the cycle of violence:

I was hurt and ashamed to say that he beat me....That person who said he loved me was beating me. I felt guilty and thought that it was my fault that he did that. I felt trapped. I did not know about institutions that fight for women's rights. I did not want to denounce him because I was afraid of him, I thought about my children, that I would not be able to support them (Testimony, PRO 79-97, 10/19/97).

Other reasons women have for not ending the domestic violence cycle are cultural, and as expressed by *Tiempo de Hablar* producers, the cultural patterns are not easy to change quickly. Within the cultural reasons there are the myths, such as the idea that domestic violence is a private matter, when it should be understood as a social problem. Other myths identified by the program include the idea that domestic violence is not very prevalent in Honduras, that men's aggressive attitudes come from their substances abuse, and that domestic violence is an issue just for lower socio-economic classes with low educational levels. *Tiempo de Hablar* asserts that violence is socially learned, and they propose alternatives to change this learned and culturally sanctionable behavior.

The reactions to *Tiempo de Hablar* recorded from my informants, varied according to age and gender. The discussions that arose after the groups heard the *Tiempo de Hablar*'s episode related to the participants' own life stories, and to their

conceptions about gender relations, and women's social movements.

Women's reaction to Tiempo de Hablar's Episode about Domestic Violence

Most of my female informants identified themselves with the situations portrayed in *Tiempo de Hablar's* item about violence, and agreed with the idea that attitudes that promote discrimination against women and domestic violence should be changed. When listening to the *Tiempo de Hablar's* program regarding domestic violence they remembered their own life situations:

Flor: Yes, this is something that happens, that has happened to us, with the first man I had, the first who took me out of my house, and also with my daughter's father, with none of them I was happy because the first one he trapped me because, you know, a girl from a little town is dummy.... Ahhh he used to beat me hard, and when he got a little drunk he used to go and fight with my dad, with my mum, to insult everybody in my house.... Even his brothers used to tell me: "Flor hide, he is coming, and he is very angry!"And if I only had the option to get under the bed I would get under the bed. I have a scar here, see? And another here....When I was pregnant, I didn't even knew why he beat me that day, he was a little drunk.... I felt the tremendous punch. I just felt how the baby turned around, and I remained like paralyzed. Well, I couldn't even cry.

Isaura: My daughter's father, he didn't drink alcohol, but he got so violent that he gave me a big kick, and I was seven months pregnant, my baby moved and even pushed his little hand outside of me. I was connected to a machine in the hospital for 12 days to save the baby.

Lila: Yes, I think that women's attitude...., especially Honduran woman must not permit more abuses from the part of men because if women do not change their attitude and get rid of false fears and those false respects, men are going to make whatever they want with her. Once a woman acquires consciousness through these projects....or programs and she starts respecting herself and raising her self-esteem.... no one will abuse her.³⁰

Tiempo de Hablar's strategy is to connect the radio programs to women's

³⁰ Flor and Isaura (54 and 36 years old) are originally from rural Honduran communities who migrated as adolescents to find a job and make a life in Tegucigalpa. They have had various partners in their lives. Flor and Isaura each have two children. They have been victims of domestic violence in their different matrimonial unions. Lila is a South American single woman in her 50s who has worked for women's rights groups in different moments of her life, in her country of origin, and in Honduras where she has lived for seven years.

lives through the recreation of true stories. This makes women think about their own life situations. One of the objectives of the radio program is to provoke women to reflect on their lives. *Tiempo de Hablar* encourages women to communicate their life experiences to other listeners.

Although most of my female informants were supportive of the equal condition and capacity of men and women, some of them also expressed that women are weaker than men and some shared the religious assumptions that women originated from the rib of a man. As expressed by Zoraida³¹:

Man is more violent...., man is stronger, he shouts at you, and you start crying, he does something, you start crying and you won't get a single tear from a man. They want to be more, they think they are more. We are made from a man's rib and that is why when a couple is married they have to be a single body. (González interviews, March 1999).

As inferred from the above quote, in order to feel equal to men, women's self-representation has to be re-conceptualized to adopt a perspective that would put them symbolically at the same level as men. As pointed out by Mendoza (1994:173), and Irigaray (1985), women committed to a "feminine" worldview must develop skills to make their representations of the world be accepted by all of society. Women have to oppose male's symbolic domination imposed on them through the centuries by subverting the symbolic order governed by a phallogocentric (Haraway 1991) perspective.

Men's Responses

My male informants also agreed that there has to be a change of attitudes in gender relations, as expressed in the following examples³²:

³¹ Zoraida, 37 years old, migrated from a rural area close to Tegucigalpa. She came to the capital with her family searching for better health services and they stayed. She is a practicing Catholic, and a communal leader.

³² Celeo, 42 years old, bachelor in law, single. Elias, 22 years old, works in business, basic school, single. Both are native of Tegucigalpa.

Celeo: Machismo is producing family disintegration... the gangs, the drug addicts, divorce, prostitution... and this also comes from family disintegration.

Elias: Well look, I think not only the man is destroying the family union, the couple is destroying the family. But in reality the man is more guilty to make the woman want to develop as a person....okay, like someone who wants to improve... the man should not kick the woman (González interviews, March 1999).

We can infer from the second quote that by treating women badly, men are provoking her desire to change her traditional role; thus, they should avoid that for her to stay still. The idea of the need to control women is present in many of the men I interviewed. They expressed women should be controlled but with respect:

Celeo: Only now women are fighting, they are fighting...

Elias: ...to be, well, not the same as man because man is man for God's will, true? But woman is being kicked by us men, and now, what happens? When a man respects a woman, she accepts that man without being humiliated by him, she lets her husband control her, but with respect: Nowadays, violence provokes man to shout to the woman and to tell her mean things without regard for their children (González interviews, March 1999)..

In contrast with women's low self-esteem, men consider themselves to be made in God's image. Women thus, can never achieve equality with them. Men often said violence should be avoided for the sake of the couple's children, but they did not express that everybody's physical integrity, including women, and other men's should be respected. Justifications of domestic violence are also present in men's reactions to *Tiempo de Hablar* episode:

Celeo: If a man really regrets being violent with his woman, he would never do it again. But also there is some responsibility on the part of the woman because she always forgives him, always. Then, man sees that every time he regrets his violent behavior she surrenders to him and forgives him and he says: "Ah, I can fool this woman forever" and the cycle repeats and repeats again.

Here, the informant gives women responsibility for their situation because they let themselves be fooled by men, when it is really a man's responsibility to control his own violent and aggressive attitudes. My male informants also expressed that women

themselves are impeding their own liberation because they have adopted men's vices, such as multiple partners, smoking, and drinking, going out at night, and being concerned about money and material things. According to my informants, women's liberation movements can increase men's disrespect for women if they are not focused adequately on the revaluation of women's intellect and spirituality. As seen in the analysis of traditional messages, the "good woman" demonstrates her higher spirituality by accepting divine will, and understanding man's weaknesses.

In their discussion about the *Tiempo de Hablar*'s episode dealing with domestic violence, my male informants moved away from the analysis of domestic violence to talk about their own pre-conceptions about women's behavior, and attitudes that make men feel insecure and threatened. The following extracts from the males' focus group (González interview: March 1999) illustrate this well³³:

Celeo: But also the woman has to decide to change society by changing her own habits... because woman has to be appreciated by a man for her intelligence, her heart and her feelings, but unfortunately there are women who go out to the street to attract men with their miniskirts.

Elias: that's correct!

Celeo: Or they [women] go out at night with them [men], or they go and sleep with them. They [women] try to trap men in a different way, and when a woman does that she is degrading and lowering herself because she is seen by a man like an object for pleasure. It is in this sense that a woman must change, she has to start by that, changing herself, fighting for the values that she is trying to reach, but those values have to be family values, intellectual values, moral values, and spiritual values.

Men also portray themselves as the victims of women's sexuality, as being too fragile to avoid the temptation of women's bodies (González interviews: March 1999).

Elias: And there is the temptation... man is fragile, man has to be strong to avoid temptation, but we take some drinks and we are fragile....

Celeo: One of the ways in which woman should start combating Machismo,

³³ Roberto, 20 years old, single, basic school, electricity technician. Native from Tegucigalpa.

is to begin dressing with decency.

These attitudes coincide with some of the ideas represented by the traditional messages. A concern for how women dress is something recurrent in traditional gender representations in mass media. In the mass media, and in the streets, women are criticized for the way they look. Women's use of miniskirts threatens men's sense of stability, as demonstrated by the fact that in 1998 women working for the *poder judicial*, (the governmental juridical offices), were forbidden to use miniskirts because "women's legs perturb men's mind" (*La Prensa*, 3/31/98). Furthermore, men try to define how things must be in their own terms, as "to avoid such and such, women should do this and that." Changing attitudes then, depends on women, not on men. Men react to women's behavior, but do not form part of the struggle to change society. Interviewing the men, I had the impression that men do not feel the need to change themselves.

Interestingly, there is a correspondence between what my male informants identify as aspects of women's bad behavior and what my female informants consider as a common explanation provided by men to justify acts of domestic violence. This can be observed in the following extracts from a letter sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*, and from interviews to female informants:

Brenda M. (La Paz, 1997): I have been married for 27 years... my husband used to drink so I endured all kinds of punches, blows, beats, and kicks.... I have tolerated everything for my children...but I can't stand it anymore, he doesn't allow me to have female friends or that I go out to have some fun with them..., he accuses me of being unfaithful, he never gives me love just shouts and shouts. Now he threatens me, he says he is going to take me back home by force from wherever I am if I ever go out again. (Letter sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*, 1997).

Isaura: We women, it is our fault because if we didn't accept it [violence] the first time, they wouldn't do it again, but we always give a second opportunity.

Nelia: He also beat me, he broke my nose, when he got drunk he used to hit me because of his jealousy.

Zoraida: Sometimes it is because they are jealous, but that is a lie.... One is

sensible, accepts everything even that they have other women. But they are not like that, they can even shut you or something. This machismo is uncontrolled.

Man's insecurity and jealousy, as well as women's complaints concerning males' infidelity, provoke reactions that often end in violence. Although men theoretically agree that violence against women is something wrong, as they expressed after hearing *Tiempo de Hablar*, they think violence will be avoided if women follow their terms. Women must have submissive traditional attitudes. Here again, we return to the stereotypes identified before, when addressing traditional women's models on the mass media: the good and the bad woman. The ideal of the good woman corresponds with the strong supportive woman, who has a higher spirituality but is obedient and submissive to men. The bad woman challenges the "good woman's" model, and is the one who attempts to be free of the patriarchal rules set by society.

Tiempo de Hablar provoked in my male informants the desire to talk about the violence issue in general terms. However, none of them identified as aggressors in situations of violence, and they did not talk about personal experiences referred to domestic violence.

Even though the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* expressed that they do not discriminate against men in the program, the shows are designed to deal with women's problems. In this context, men do not feel directly involved. They say it is a woman's problem, not man's. Since *Tiempo de Hablar* is trying to contribute to a change of attitudes in society, it will be difficult if men are not fully included. The subject of men and masculinity in *Tiempo de Hablar* is now seen as a matter ripe for change. The program encourages masculine identities that are more realistic. Nevertheless, the inclusion of a more inclusive perspective for men in every episode would help *Tiempo de Hablar* connect with a wider audience.

Audience's Letters

Insight to the connection between domestic violence and the interaction between *Tiempo de Hablar* and its audiences is found in the letters sent by some of the listeners to the program's producers (Figure 12). Through the letters, the producers of



Figure 12
Map of Honduras showing the origin of letters sent by audiences to
Tiempo de Hablar
 (The numbers show the amount of letters sent from each locality).

Tiempo de Hablar evaluate the impact of the program. By sending letters to the program, women try to find solidarity, friendship, support, and understanding from other women facing similar situations. The radio program seeks to develop a women's network of solidarity by providing women with the necessary information to react to particular situations. In isolated communities women have to find solutions based on communal support and self-reliance in adverse environments. *Tiempo de Hablar* producers help their listeners then by answering the letters, and talking during the program about specific cases, providing legal advice, names of possible contacts, information about psychological strategies to overcome problems, or tips to improve a couple's communication. Table 5.2. shows the main topics addressed in 78 of the letters sent by *Tiempo de Hablar* listeners from 1994 to 1999.

Most of the letters received from the listeners emphasize women's own situation as victims of domestic violence (Figures 13 and 14), as is shown in the following extract from a letter sent to *Tiempo de Hablar* in September 1996:

I am a 20 years old young woman, I graduated last year as a commercial secretary, and last year I had intimate relations with a man, and became pregnant. I have a four month old little girl. My daughter's father is a man I can't ask anything because he beats me.... He had another woman and he used to beat me when he got mad at her. There was a time when I went out of [my town] and when I came back he punished me so much that he broke my mouth. On another occasion, at a Christmas party he went in and punched my eye and I was pregnant. He is 22 years old, and has a horrible character.
(Letter sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*, September, 1996).

The letters' emphasis on violence is in part a response to *Tiempo de Hablar*'s focus on domestic violence, a response to women's real problems. Through the letters women communicate to *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers their feelings of dependency, hopes, frustrations, decisions, and fears, and also their perspectives on motherhood.

The letters that focus on domestic violence normally ask for help from the *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers for women to be able to defend themselves. Some women need help for themselves, and also ask for advice for other women in their communities who are experiencing similar situations.

Table 5.2.
Letters sent by Listeners
of *Tiempo de Hablar* radio program

Subjects	Women's Letters	Men's letters	Total	
Domestic violence	13	-	13	14.4%
Asking information/ encouraging the program	13	1	14	18.4%
Discrimination against women	6	-	6	7.8%
Legal advice	5	-	5	6.5%
Health (birth control, pregnancies ...)	5	-	5	6.5%
Asking for more information to instruct others	4	1	5	6.5%
Asking the radio producers for personal favors	4	-	4	5.2%
Stating a change in their lives from hearing the program	3	-	3	3.9%
Sexual harassment and abuse	3	-	3	3.9%
Differences between city - countryside	2	-	2	2.6%
Delinquency	2	-	2	2.6%
Migration	2	-	2	2.6%
Other radio programs' producers making contact	2	-	2	2.6%
Politics and women	2	-	2	2.6%
Unfaithfulness in the couple	2	-	2	2.6%
Men alcoholism	1	-	1	1.3%
Divorce	1	-	1	1.3%
Lack of solidarity between women	1	-	1	1.3%
Violence against men	1	-	1	1.3%
Lack of solidarity in the couple	1	-	1	1.3%
Sexual advice	0	1	1	1.3%
Religion and women	1	-	1	1.3%
Reconstruction after hurricane Mitch	1	-	1	1.3%
Total subjects : 23	73	3	78	100%

Source: Letters sent by audiences to *Tiempo de Hablar* radio program, *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres*, Tegucigalpa, August 1998.

Es un hombre violento

Otenos de San Cristobal Km.17
Queridas personas espero que me
ayuden y disculpen que no se
como se yamen.
y de cao que se encuentran bien.
Les escribo para ver en que
me pueden guiar es sobre mi
esposo que es un brutal animal
tenemos 3 niñas y un niño
y a las niñas y al niño a abusado de
ellas y lo no le puedo reclamar por que
solo sabe decir que son mentirosas y me
escapo de matar y cuando le digo que
se bolla y que me deje en paz es
peor por que me da mala vida
y no se que hacer por que no
quiero que el se de cuenta por que
es capaz de matarme al darce
cuenta que lo e denunciado
y no se como salir de este
problema de tengo miedo
estoy desesperado y no se
como me puedan ayudar por
que no quiero que me escriban
por que si el se da
cuenta que resibo carta
me mata el es D
y lo guana.

Figure 13
Letter sent to Tiempo de Hablar

El Paraíso, September 1996

*Women Rights Program or
Tiempo de Hablar*

I hope that you enjoy good health when receiving this note. I always listen to your program in Radio America. I decided to ask you for help if you could send me some brochures to learn how to defend myself. I am a young woman with 20 years old, I graduated last year as a commercial secretary, and last year I had intimate relations with a man, becoming pregnant. I have a four months old little girl. My daughter's father is a man to whom I can't ask anything because he beats me. When I was pregnant ... I used to live alone with a friend and he used to come just to beat me.

He had another woman and he used to beat me when he got mad at her. There was a time when I went out of [my town] and when I came back he punished me so much that he broke my mouth. In another occasion, in a Christmas party he went in and punched my eye and I was pregnant. He has 22 years old but has a horrible mood.

Now that I have the girl he visits me at my father's house but he never says "I love you" but he says he loves the girl and that he wants to take care of us, but I am afraid, because after one month of having my daughter he took us and when we discussed he beat me again.

Now I live with my parents and he does not allow me to have friends, I don't know what to do. I need advice to be able to defend myself. While I was pregnant he left me and when he saw me he humiliated me and I think that if the same would happen now I would accuse him, but his mother occupies an important position in the Court House and as she doesn't like me I am afraid she will act against me. Write to me, and if you need money to send me the brochures, there is no problem, I will always be grateful, best regards.

Ana María Alvarado

PS: If you read the letter in the program please don't say my name, but my pseudonym: "Faded Rose"

God grants you more wisdom today and forever.

Source: Letters sent by audiences to *Tiempo de Hablar*, September, 1996. Translated from the original in Spanish.

Figure 14
Translation of a letter sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*

Table 5.3. shows the main issues addressed by the letters sent by *Tiempo de Hablar*'s listeners referred to domestic violence.

Table 5.3.
Letters sent by *Tiempo de Hablar*'s Listeners
Domestic Violence

Letter's Topics	Times mentioned
Refer to physical violence against the woman and children	12
Refer to psychological violence	4
Refer to sexual violence against women and/or children	4
Refer to man as being unfaithful, and violent with his wife	3
Refer to man being violent because of jealousy	3
Refer to woman being afraid of man, and of denouncing him	5
Refer to man as wanting to separate from his wife and take the children by force	2
Refer to man's violence referred to alcohol intake	2
Total Letters	13

Source: Letters sent by audiences to *Tiempo de Hablar* radio program, *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres*, Tegucigalpa, August 1998.

All the letters had in common the theme of domestic violence. Fear of leaving their husbands or denounce them were also common issues. Most of the letters said that after hearing *Tiempo de Hablar* women felt less fearful of confronting their situation of domestic violence. In one of the letters a woman even expressed that she stopped being afraid after she heard *Tiempo de Hablar*:

Friends, I thank God for your program. I always listen to it, and you have made me understand that I can claim my rights as a woman, and also to understand that I am valuable. My husband used to mistreat me and my two little girls.... once, he even disfigured the face of my little girl. After I heard your program in *Radio America* I stopped being afraid, but I thought of how I was going to

be able to support my family. You made me understand that a woman is able to be independent through her own effort. I left my husband and took the girls with me, now I have my own job.... (Letters sent to *Tiempo de Hablar*, Ojojona, August 1996).

Listening to *Tiempo de Hablar*'s radio program might in some way, contribute to a crisis and a conflict because women realize that they have to put an end to the violent situation in their lives. The show has encouraged women to become more confident confronting their abusive husbands. Although *Tiempo de Hablar*'s producers are not able to help all women in all communities of the country, in a direct-practical way, the information they provide and the links the program creates between women in their particular communities or neighborhoods, makes women feel they are not alone in their struggles for justice and equality. In some instances the show gives them the courage to take the risk to start a new life.

Conclusions

The radio program *Tiempo de Hablar* connects with women by giving them a sense of the everyday life. The dialogues and dramas used by the radio program situate characters in the midst of current social situations. The program focuses on conflictive situations related to the daily life and common problems faced by Honduran women.

Tiempo de Hablar is produced by a local women's organization. It is immersed in local issues and in permanent contact with Honduran women's real problems. Yet it also connects with gender issues developed by feminists groups worldwide, such as the concept of patriarchy, international women rights, laws against domestic violence, gender inequality, and women's discrimination.

Due to the prevailing religious beliefs in Honduran society, it is difficult to deeply contend rooted ideas. As is pointed by my informants (González interviews, January 1999):

[To change the beliefs] is not easy in an eminently religious country such as ours in which the church has an enormous influence... and is the principal promoter of these, for us, anti-values. But, according to them, we are the ones who promote the anti-values

Yet, they [the religious groups] coincide with us in some perspectives such as domestic violence. I have conducted workshops for the Catholic church about self-esteem and violence, but if we want to talk about something as reproductive rights, we enter in contradictions.

Also about marriage, because the basis of marriage is the woman, according to them [religious groups], and she has to withstand everything.... When women are affected [by domestic violence] and they go to their priests and spiritual guides, they don't provide them with a response according to women's real emotional needs, they ask women almost to deny themselves, their own needs, to keep violence as part of their lives. Sometimes we have to rapidly react to their public statements about very controversial subjects that affect women's rights such as: reproductive rights, the use of condom, AIDS.... These matters are seen through a double moral and in a terrible naive way: They say that abstinence is better, in a society that promotes uninformed sexual relations, were women go without information to sexual relations. Then they call to abstinence, a double moral, as if they didn't know our country's reality.

The producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* attempt to portray realistic representations for men and women in Honduran society by interviewing real people who talk about daily situations, and by taking real life cases into the radio using a common language, and presenting varied situations that portray reality.

One way in which the producers of *Tiempo de Hablar* evaluate the impact of the program is through yearly workshops that include audiences and producers. In one of the meetings the producers hired a consultant to evaluate the impact through focus groups consisting of listeners of the program. Some of the listeners interviewed for the evaluation (Sánchez 1998:16) stated that they already had some ideas about women's rights and that for them it was surprising to suddenly hear them on the radio. Radio, then, reaffirmed some people's desires for life changes. In other cases, participants, women and men, heard new ideas, and learned new concepts and ways to understand their relationship with others. Some of the listeners stated that they were even applying

what they had learned from *Tiempo de Hablar* to educate their children.

According to the producer Nora Miselén (González interview: January 1999), society's acceptance that women's issues must be considered, seems to reflect a change of attitude. As Nora (Gonzalez interview: January 1999) pointed out, when the program started in 1994, they had to fight for a space on the most powerful radio station. Power issues were at work at that time and the managers of the station just conceded half an hour to the program. This attitude has changed; now women's programs are taken more into account and the producers even receive congratulations for their performance. The managers of the radio station have become more committed to the program and, sometimes, they even defend the *Tiempo de Hablar* discourse. As expressed by Nora "they have become more humanized through hearing the program" (Miselén, González Interviews, January 1999).

Tiempo de Hablar has a broad audience throughout Honduras. Through the letters, the workshops and the evaluations, women are showing a great interest in the program as they feel close to the issues it raises. The subtle way in which the program addresses conflictive matters such as religion, birth control, and feminism works to maintain the audiences interest and avoids counter reactions. The number of women talking about a "change in their lives after hearing the program" (Sánchez 1998:16) appears considerable. Radio is still a prevalent mass media in Honduras. The cultural effect of radio programs is important as well as the feedback the radio receives from the audiences. The program is then, a creation of both producers and listeners.

As Marshall McLuhan (1994:299) has pointed out, "radio affects most people intimately, person-to-person, offering a world of unspoken communication between writer-speaker and the listener. That is the immediate aspect of radio. A private experience." This is an important characteristic as experienced by Honduran women, as radio does not disrupt the domestic environment in which they are immersed. The privacy of "she and her radio alone" (González interviews: August 1998) permits

every woman to reflect while her life goes on, until eventually she decides that things must change.

6 Conclusions

This thesis has explored the ways in which gender stereotypes are negotiated in Honduran mass media through the broadcast of women's radio programs. It has focused on the negotiation of "traditional," and "alternative" gender representations portrayed in radio programs in Honduras and the social ideology that informs them. Mass media has been a contributing force in processes of cultural deterritorialization. The perspectives presented by women's media surpass particular cultures, and provide elements that are common for women all over the world. Through the various organizations that work with women's "alternative" media, new concepts have emerged and a common language has started to take form--in many cases independently of nationality, ethnicity, and social class. Women's alternative media transcends national, regional, and local borders. It has the potential to construct a gender identity that unites women beyond their particular local geographical and cultural locations. On the context of increased globalization and the disappearance of "traditional" boundaries between cultural groups, mass media is of increased interest for anthropologists.

Analysis of Honduran women's radio programs gives insight into the relationship between the local and global gender representations. Furthermore, it provides, in a broader context, insight into the dynamic relationship that exists between social movements like feminism and the mass media.

The Role of Radio in Honduran Society

In Honduras the cultural impact of radio is immense. In some cases, radio can be understood as an alternative media particularly when compared with other media that are less open to popular participation, such as the newspapers, and television. Since its origins, radio in Honduras has been available for people to voice their

opinions both public and private. Men and women from different social classes are able to take part. Women's participation in radio programs that address their own particular problems is part of a trend, already deep-rooted in the country.

Women's organizations in Honduras have used the media, especially radio, as an instrument to promote their ideas. In 1947 Honduran women had a radio program devoted specifically to the issue of women's right to vote. Even though women have participated in radio programs, currently, in most of the radio stations I analyzed, men are still the primary producers and presenters. Even when the role of announcer is shared by both men and women, men's degree of participation is greater.

The Representation of Gender Stereotypes in Honduran Mass Media

Radio commercials have stronger gender stereotyping than news broadcastings in most of the radio programs analyzed. Analysis of radio commercials, gender representations in newspapers and television, and other social images, illustrate the polarization of women's images into a binary opposition of good (traditional-mother-housewife) and bad (beauty-sex symbol-or disruptive of tradition). The representation of women provided by most radio commercials fits into the image of the mother-homemaker. In this model women are represented as mothers, as the transmitters of tradition and spiritual values to their families. The beauty model for women appears with greater frequency in visual media such as television, newspapers, and magazines.

By reconciling traditional women's roles with the idea of modernity or "the woman of today" image, the commercials in radio programs preserve traditional roles and promote them for contemporary women, and for future generations. The mother image portrayed in radio commercials appears to be class dependent, as it presents variations according to whether the messages are directed to middle-class urban populations, or to people from the rural areas.

Although these symbolic representations have a certain correspondence with

the organization of Honduran society, actual gender roles go beyond the ideal set for them. While traditional conceptions of the role of woman as housewife and mother predominate in Honduras, reality demonstrates that women participate in a broader set of social activities.

The symbolism that relates ideas of nationality to men, highlights men's productive role. Men are the ones in charge of the material conditions of their families, and consequently, of the country. Men's gender images are ambivalent. Sometimes men are represented as dependent (for food or health needs) on their wives and mothers. This image is in opposition to representations of the protective men, who are supportive and strong heads of their households.

In contrast to advertisements, news reporting presents a more accurate view of reality. News accounts represent women's participation in the nation's politics, social life and economics. Although women are represented to a lesser degree than men, the role of those included in the news is relevant as women appear as the heads of important institutions, and in charge of taking major decisions in the country.

Negotiating Gender Representations through Alternative Radio Programs in Honduras

In opposition to the prevalence of the myth of the "good" and "bad" woman, (as embodied in the ideal "self-effacing" mothers and the "temptress, sexual object,") my research shows that given the opportunity to express themselves, women resist and contest these ideals and look for "alternative" models of gender relations. The radio program *Tiempo de Hablar* is a good example of the negotiation of gender identities through the mass media.

This thesis demonstrated that the use of radio broadcasts by women's organizations in Honduras contributes to increase consciousness and reflection about gender roles in Honduran society, and challenges the traditional stereotypes. Through

the analysis of the contesting gender stereotypes portrayed in the different radio programs, and other mass media, the interviews pursued with the producers of the women's radio program *Tiempo de Hablar*, and with potential listeners, and the analysis of audience's letters, this thesis has illustrated how radio in Honduras helps to construct collective social identities such as gender. Radio is one of the various sources through which social change might be produced.

Traditional gender images in Honduran mass media respond to social ideals tempered by a partial perspective of reality. In contrast to traditional representations, *Tiempo de Hablar* portrays realistic situations for men and women in Honduran society instead of creating romanticized images of gender relations. Interviewing women, and men who talk about their daily lives with a "common" language, and who present varied situations enables *Tiempo de Hablar* to connect with "real" people. In this way, *Tiempo de Hablar* reaffirms some people's desires for life changes, and in other cases, people have learned new ideas, concepts, and ways to understand their relationship with others.

My research found that there is a gap between the ideals presented in commercial advertisements and reality. Most women interviewed connected with women's messages from *Tiempo de Hablar*. Men identified to a greater degree with the traditional messages' gender ideals.

Honduran society's acceptance that women's issues must be considered reflects a social "opening" for change. Through the insertion of "alternative" messages into the current "dominant" mass media, the existence of a binary opposition between "traditional" and "alternative" programs has been challenged.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1

Radio Programs Recorded

(May-July 1998)

No	Date recorded	Radio Program	Main focus	Subjects addressed
1	May 1998	<i>La Tribuna del Pueblo</i>	Politics/ Honduran government News reporting	- Corruption in Honduras - Political parties - Honduran governmental history - Globalization policies - Building-up political consciousness in Honduras
2	May 1998	<i>Mensaje religioso</i>	Religious messages	- Relations between people, advocating self control in men.
3	May 1998	<i>Por la reformulación del magisterio</i>	Teachers' organizations in the country and their fights for better salaries	- Literacy campaign - Teachers' salaries - Negotiation between teachers and the government - Education in Honduras compared with the rest of Latin America - Magisterial census
4	June 1998	<i>Tiempo de Hablar</i>	Women's rights	- Women's rights - Torture- The International day against torture - Violation of human rights in Honduras in the 1980s and torture - Domestic violence seen as torture
5	June 1998	<i>La Noticia Sin Malicia</i>	Humor	- Parody of political parties in Honduras
6	June 2, 1998	<i>Auditorio nacional de radio America</i>	News reporting	- Disasters caused in the capital by strong rains; the lack of organization and prevention on the part of governmental organizations in charge of control and prevention of natural disasters
7	June 4, 1998	<i>Consultorio del Aire</i>	Health consultation and advice	- Women's self-esteem - Women's psychological problems and depression - Women's self development

8	June 4, 1998	<i>La Noticia sin Malicia</i>	Humor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parody about natural disasters caused by rain in Tegucigalpa and the governmental lack of prevention - Satirical commentary about rape (castration, Lorena Bobbit) - Parody about prisons and the escape of Clotilde, "the witch"
9	May 25, 1998	<i>La Prensa del Aire</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governmental loans for peasants - Rains and natural disasters - Peasant land issues and the agrarian reform
10	May 1998	<i>Noticiero del Mediodia</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best Journalist prize - Destruction of forests
11	May 18, 1998	<i>Noticiero El Minuto</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smog problem in Honduras, Central America and Mexico - Sigfrida Chantal, the first Honduran transsexual is murdered - Transnational corporations evade taxes in Honduras - Coffee harvesting in danger - Bonus for mothers
12	May 1998	<i>Estamos a Tiempo</i>	Ecology and preservation of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Against milleniarism and pessimism - Conservation of the Mesoamerican ecological corridor - Project for the conservation of the <i>Rio Plátano</i> Biosphere
13	May 18, 1998	<i>Reflexiones</i>	Protestant Religion's message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advising people to read the Bible even if they feel "dirty inside"
14	May 15, 1998	<i>Auditorio Nacional</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The smog covers Honduras. Problems in airports
15	May 25, 1998	<i>Informativo del Mediodia</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prize for the best journalist of the year: words of the president of Honduras during the election of the best journalist.
16	May 27, 1998	<i>Health program</i>	Health advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complaint about the water and electricity companies' performance in Tegucigalpa
17	May 1998	<i>Diario Matutino</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic information - Political parties information - World soccer games

18	July 1998	<i>Contrapunto</i>	Regional issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copán : The archaeological park and the community. Copán's potential for tourism and the support this community is obtaining from the government.
19	July 27, 1998	<i>En Noticias</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governmental support to a Honduran woman who is being put to trial in USA - Educational Project at the National University
20	May 28,1998	<i>Noticiero radio Satelite</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Messages from people who call during program and give their opinion
21	May 28,1998	<i>BS Noticias</i>	News reporting from the Catholic Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reproductive health in Honduras and governmental policies to support women's health. - Biagra, "The love pill"
22	May 28,1998	<i>BS Noticias</i>	News reporting from the Catholic Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The reform of the 107 constitutional article that forbids foreigners to buy land on the sea line in Honduras.. Audiences reactions and interviews against this governmental decision. - Corruption in the national police - Struggle between parents of students and the ministry of education authorities - Pope's message to social communicators. - Tegucigalpa's airport
23	July 8, 1998	<i>Noticiero El Minuto</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reform of the 107 constitutional article - Honduran coffee is devaluated in the international market - Violence and fire weapons in central Honduras
24	July 1998	<i>El Consultorio del Aire</i>	Health consultation and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - World Soccer games - Response to letters sent by audiences - Depression/ Bricket syndrome - Reproductive health
25	July 15,1998	<i>La Prensa del Aire</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevention against dengue - Political parties in Honduras - Bankers concern about delinquency
26	July 1998	<i>Auditorio del Aire</i>	News reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elimination of the head of the armed forces in Honduras position - Injustice in the salary increases in governmental institutions

27	July 1998	<i>Reflexiones</i>	Protestant religious program	- The difference between a church and a sect
28	July 24, 1998	<i>Diario del Aire</i>	News reporting	- Message from World Vision-Honduras to Honduran farmers: "How to feed plants properly"
29	June 24, 1998	<i>Ecos de Opalaca</i>	Ethnic organization's program/ indigenous issues	- Music - 169 ILO Convention for the indigenous peoples: ratification by Honduras and the issues it involves - Audiences messages - Struggle with the governmental Ethnic courthouse after the destruction of a Christopher Columbus statue by the indigenous peoples
30	July 1998	<i>El Reloj Informativo</i>	News reporting	- Work code reforms - Supported by bankers, the army plans to go to the streets to combat common violence - Meeting of sex workers with the city's major
31	July 1998	<i>El Consultorio del Aire</i>	Health consultation and advice	- Response to letters sent by audiences - Depression and "Bricket" syndrome
32	July 1998	<i>La Prensa del Aire</i>	News reporting	- Extradition from Canada of a Honduran military who was involved in the disappearances in the 1980s decade
33	July 1998	<i>Noticiero HRN</i>	News reporting	- Warning about contaminated food in the markets - Educational data from the National University
34	July 7 1998	<i>La Prensa del Aire</i>	News reporting	- Warning about contaminated water - World soccer games
35	July 1998	<i>Diario Matutino</i>	News reporting	- The Garifuna ethnic group threatens the government to put a demand at the international level because of the reform of the 107 constitutional article - Illegal Honduran migrants are deported from USA

Appendix 2

Description of the *Tiempo de Hablar*'s Episodes Analyzed

No.	Subject	Duration	Date Broadcasted	Identification Code
1	Feminine Identity I	18 min.	6-7-98	PRO 34-98
2	Feminine Identity II	18 min.	7-12-98	PRO 46-98
3	What songs tell us	30 min.	10-12-97	PRO 77-97
4	What magazines tell us	30 min.	10-5-97	PRO 75-97
5	Violence in Print Press	30 min.	12-14-97	PRO 95-97
6	"My Age" Discrimination	30 min.	11-23-97	
7	Friendship between women	30 min.	2-13-98	PRO 8-98
8	Virginity as seen by women	30 min		
9	Virginity as seen by men	30 min		
10	101 ways of love	30 min		PRO 225
11	Why do I think I am nothing without a man?	30 min.	9-28-97	PRO 73-97
12	Domestic violence	30 min.	10-19-97	PRO 79-97
13	Reaction to Hurricane Mitch	30 min	11-6-98	PRO 74-98
14	Masculinity	30 min	7-10-98	PRO 45-98
15	What means to be a mother	20 min	5-10-98	PRO 32-98
16	Histories and testimonies (set)	4 hours	1998	

Source: Tape recordings of *Tiempo de Hablar*, July 1998.

Appendix 3

Negotiating Gender Identities in Honduras The Contribution of Women's Radio Programs

Protocol Radio Programs Content Analysis

Protocol no. ☐ Cassette No. ☐ Radio Program No. ☐

Radio Station: _____

Radio Program name _____

Date recorded: _____ Time: _____

It has commercial advertisements? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, how many? _____

It has another kind of advertisements or messages? Yes ☐ No ☐

Specify type of messages: _____

Producers of the program _____

The program is:

Private ☐ Governmental ☐ NGO ☐ Non-profit organization ☐

International organization ☐ Religious organization ☐ Women's organization ☐

Gremial ☐ Other ☐

Names and status of individuals presented or interviewed

Structure of the program:

Subject	Time	Presenter	Content

Appendix 4

Letters sent to Tiempo de Hablar

CENTRO DE DERECHOS DE MUJERES

CDM

Queridas Amigas les saludo con respeto, cariño y admiración y al mismo tiempo felicitarles por la gran labor que están desempeñando a nuestro favor

Amigas en enero de este año les escribí con el propósito de ser promotora legal, pues no se pudo aun así con los foyotes que me mandaron más unos que ya tenía he hablado con mis amigas, vecinas y con toda clase de mujer y reclamamos nuestros derechos, empezando por mis hijas, porque lo que yo he sufrido no quiero que lo sufra nadie, nadie y menos mis hijas, queridas amigas quiero que me ayuden soy VICTIMA DE LA VIOLENCIA DOMESTICA tengo 27 años de casada me caso de 15 años, mi esposo tenía así le aguanté como dicen 11 años con empujones, patadas, puñetazos, jaloneos de pelo y tenían de sexo a la hora que él quería, y para serlas sincera jamás supe lo que era satisfacción sexual después que dejé la bebida agarre mas la mujerada cuando llegaba tarde a la casa discutíamos por que yo le reclamaba y terminaba pegandome, antes de este alguno de mis hijas me decía ¿mami caya te) pero yo no porque algunas veces él llegaba de la calle reclamando por la comida, por los niños, bueno por cualquier cosa.

Queridas Amigas es una historia larga de contar, Tenemos ocho hijos, cinco mujeres y tres varones, Yo digo todo lo he aguantado por mis hijos porque tengan sus padres juntos, porque tengan un hogar formado por obediencia al matrimonio, porque sabía que la mujer debe estar siempre sujeta al hombre, por miedo y no se porque más he aguantado tanto pero ya no soporto esta vida él no quiere que mis amigas o excompañeras de colegio me visiten o que celebremos algo, tampoco que yo salga a reunirme

con ellas, me acusa de infidelidad, nunca me da amor ni cariño, solo gritos e insultos, tengo miedo cuando él ha entrado a la casa.

Le digo que me saque a alguna reunión no lo hace dice estar enfermo o cansado y algunas veces me he ido sola y se queda insultandome o burlandose que como que estoy de quince para salir y no sé que más.

Ahora me amenaza ayer precisamente domingo 20 de octubre me dijo la próxima vez que salgas te voy a traer del pelo y de arrastras de donde estés

Queridas Amigas les diré que mi agresor es una persona aparentemente respetable pues ha tenido cargos importantes dentro del gobierno, como secretario municipal, Receptor Jefe de Letras, Jefe de personal de la Corte Gobernador Político de este Depto. Diputado al Congreso Nacional, Y ahora esta como precandidato a la Alcaldía de este Municipio de La Paz pero es

hombre como todos, El fuera de la casa es una gran persona la gente lo quiere mucho sus hijos lo aman pero yo no, ya no quiero esta vida él mata el amor que había en mí yo ya no quiero tener nada con él ya no quiero este encierro soy P. M. y C. P. y por su egoísmo nunca he trabajado.

Que me aconsejen queridas amigas necesito su ayuda por favor, pase lleran de revisando mi vida y quiero ser feliz aunque sea los últimos años de mi vida, si es posible quisiera hasta el divorcio pero liberarme de esto. MI esposo se llama Francisco Filiberto Isaula, como está en lo mejor la política no quiere que se vea en un escanalar.

Blanca Manuel de Isaula
Barrio La Concepción La Paz, La Paz

1/60. 74-24-29

Appendix 4
Letters sent to Tiempo de Hablar

MA?
MARIA ES UNA MUCHACHA DE 17 AÑOS SU MAMÁ LA LLEVO
A UNA FIESTA, ALLÍ CONOCIÓ A PEDRO ESTO FUE AMOR A
PRIMERA VISTA, EL ERA PEÓN DE CAJADERÍA ELLA UNA SEÑORA
DE SU CASA, LO VEÍA PASAR Y LO ESPERABA EN UNA LINDA
PIEDRA GRANDE, POR LA TARDE NO PASARON MÁS DE 2
MESES CUANDO EL SE LA LLEVO PARA SU CASA TODO FUE
MUY BIEN, CUANDO SE PRESENTÓ ANTE SUS PADRES CON UN
MORETE EN SU CARA, SU PAPA SE ENOJO MUCHO Y HASTA SE
FUE A LA CASA DE PEDRO Y SE DIERON DE TODO, EL PAPA
DEFENDIÓ A MARÍA. Dijo ESA ES TU MUJER NO TU HIJA O ALGUN
ANIMAL DE TU PROPIEDAD, LUEGO ELLA WEGO A SU CASA Y LE
Dijo A PEDRO QUE LO INTENTARÁN DE NUEVO PASARON 2 MESES
MARÍA YA ESTABA EMBARAZADA. AL TIEMPO LLEGO A CASA DE LOS
PAPAS CON SU PEQUEÑA NIÑA ERA LINDA SUS ABUELOS LAS
ADORABAN PASARON DOS AÑOS Y DE NUEVO QUEDÓ EMBARAZADA
MAGDA YA TENÍA 2 AÑOS PASARON 4 AÑOS OTRO BEBE Y HASTA
AHORITA HAN PASADO 13 AÑOS DESDE QUE TODO EMPEZO MARÍA Y PEDRO
SON PADRES DE 4 NIÑOS MAGDA YA ES UNA ADOLESCENTE, TONI,
SARA, LILI EN LA ESCUELA, PEDRO HA CAMBIADO MUCHO DEJO
DE SER EL PEDRO DE MARÍA, AHÍ ME PARECE QUE DESDE QUE
— GOLPEO POR PRIMERA VEZ A LO SE ROMPIÓ.

Appendix 4
Letters sent to Tiempo de Hablar

7 AHORA VIVEN PELEANDO ELLA HA DESQUIDADADO MUCHO A
SUS NIJOS Y HASTA ELLA MISMA POR VIVIR PENSIENTEE
PEDRO QUE DICE, HA TAMBIEN A ESTE PEDRO SE LAS DA DE
DON JUAN Y CADA RATITO SALE CON UNA AMIGA NUEVA ESTO
YA ES EL COLMO ORITA CADA RATITO QUE ENCUENTRA LA PIZ LA VIAL
EN SU CAMISA. MARIA YA NO ES MARIA SOLO ES UN CUERPO
VACIO CON TODA CLASE DE PREOCUPACIONES SIN IMPORTANCIA
AHORA TIENE 30 AÑOS Y NO VIVE NO SE COMO
HACER PARA AYUDARLA YA LO HE INTENTADO TODO
SIN QUE ELLA PONGA CUERPO ALGUNO.

MARCA NO TIENE CONSIDERACIONES CON SU MADRE PERO
ES COMPRENSIBLE PORQUE MARIA NO LES HA DEDICADO
EL TIEMPO SU TIEMPO DE MADRE LO TIRO POR LA
VENTANA POR ANDAR TRAS LOS PASOS DE PEDRO
BUENO, CADA QUIEN JUZGA ESTE CUADRO TAN
TRISTE Y QUE SEGURAMENTE NUNCA CAMBIARA

DIGNA R. MALO

Appendix 4
Letters sent to Tiempo de Hablar

San Juanito F.M. 5-3-96

Señores miembros del Centro de
derechos de mujeres Presente.
sirva lo presente para desearles
éxitos en sus labores cotidianas
y pidiéndole a Dios que los ilumine
para que sigan adelante y luchando
contra la violencia femenina y al
mismo tiempo pidiendo información
sobre los derechos de la mujer y
Violencia ya que yo vivo aquí
fuera de la ciudad en un pueblo
y uno mira casi semanal violencia
Hombres que golpean a sus mujeres
y ellas solo meter el lomo y casi
siempre ellos se echan la culpa.
es por eso que solicito información
porque nosotros las mujeres todavía
estamos con la cara agachada y
no lo queremos levantar y ya
es tiempo que levanten cabeza

Appendix 4
Letters sent to Tiempo de Hablar

y no callar cualquier abuso
hacia nuestra persona.
esperando una positiva información
me despido de ustedes
soy madre soltera y madre de 3 hijos
en las edades de 10 años el varón
8 años la niña y 7 años la niña
y trabajo en el correo de mi pueblo
soy la agente Postal de aquí
mi dirección es

Martha Zepeda
Agente Postal
San Juanito F.M.
C.P. 11203

Que Dios los Bendiga

atentamente

M. Zepeda

Appendix 5
List of Radio Programs in Honduras
(1996)

Listado de emisoras en "AM"

DEPARTAMENTO DE FRANCISCO MORAZÁN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Aeropuerto	1090	Tegucigalpa
América	650	"
Cadena de Noticias	1340	"
Centro	850	"
Cosmos	1480	"
Estereo Mil	1030	"
Capital	1210	"
Comayagüela	760	"
Difusora Cristiana	940	"
Éxitos	640	"
Fiesta	1120	"
Honduras	880	"
La Nueva Radio Cadena	1330	"
La Voz de Centroamérica	1060	"
H.R.N.	670	"
La Voz de la Amistad	1300	"
La Voz de Suyapa	910	"
La Voz Evangélica	1390	"
Moderna	820	"
Monumental	1240	"
Nuevo Mundo	1540	"
Reloj	700	"
San Pedro (r)	1360	"
Satélite	790	"
Solaris	1600	"
Sonora	1270	"
Taxi	1180	"
Tegucigalpa	580	"
Televisión	730	"
Tic Tac	970	"
Titania	1450	"
Unión Radio	1000	"
Universal	1150	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE COMAYAGUA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	620	Siguatepeque
Cadena Continental	1250	Comayagua
Cadena Radial Impacto	830	Comayagua
Campeona	560	Comayagua
Centro Radial Hondureño	950	Siguatepeque
Colonial	1340	Comayagua
Comayagua	710	Comayagua
Corporación	800	Comayagua
Estereo Punto	1400	Comayagua
Honduras (r)	890	Comayagua
La Voz de Centroamérica (r)	590	Siguatepeque
H.R.N. (r)	680	Siguatepeque
Minerva	1040	Comayagua
Pinares	1130	Siguatepeque
Radiolandia	1460	Comayagua
Sensación	1160	Siguatepeque
Radio Siguatepeque	1070	Siguatepeque
Sistema	920	Comayagua

DEPARTAMENTO DE LA PAZ

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Dinorama	1010	La Paz
Libertad	1310	Marcala
Marahnata	1430	La Paz
San Miguel	1280	Marcala
Suari	1220	Marcala

DEPARTAMENTO DE CORTÉS

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	590	San Pedro Sula
Continental	620	San Pedro Sula
Cortés	950	Puerto Cortés
Del 70	1430	Puerto Cortés
Difusora Cristiana de Radio	1520	San Pedro Sula
Eco	740	San Pedro Sula
El Mundo	1340	San Pedro Sula
Estrella de Oro	1400	San Pedro Sula
Éxitos	1040	San Pedro Sula
Fabulosa	920	San Pedro Sula
Fraternidad	1370	San Pedro Sula
Futura	1520	San Pedro Sula
Honduras (r)	890	San Pedro Sula
La Voz de Centroamérica	650	San Pedro Sula
H.R.N. (r)	680	San Pedro Sula
La Voz de la Costa	1220	San Pedro Sula
La Voz del Atlántico	1160	Puerto Cortés
La Voz Evangélica (r)	1310	San Pedro Sula
Mi Favorita	1070	San Pedro Sula
Monumental	980	San Pedro Sula
Mundial	800	San Pedro Sula
Norte	770	San Pedro Sula
Nueva Vida	1550	Cofradía
Porteña	1490	Puerto Cortés
San Pedro	860	San Pedro Sula
Saturno	1190	San Pedro Sula
Sula	830	San Pedro Sula
Tiempo	1100	San Pedro Sula

DEPARTAMENTO DE COLÓN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Colón	1310	Tocoa
Juventud	1490	Sonaguera
H.R.N. (r)	680	Tocoa
Mundial	1430	Tocoa
Sangrelaya	960	Iriona
Savá	1220	Savá
Tocoa	980	Tocoa
Trujillo	750	Trujillo

DEPARTAMENTO DE YORO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Aguán	770	Olanchito
Honduras (r)	890	Olanchito
La Primerísima	1040	Olanchito
H.R.N. (r)	710	Olanchito
Lux	1100	Olanchito
Moderna	1010	El Progreso
Olanchito	1280	Yoro
Progreso	1130	El Progreso
Santiago	1520	Yoro
Subirana	1460	Yoro
Yoro	800	Yoro

DEPARTAMENTO DE OLANCHO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	620	Juticalpa
Catacamas	920	Catacamas
Constelación	1010	Juticalpa
Emperador	980	Campamento
Excelsior	830	Juticalpa
Honduras (r)	890	Juticalpa
Juticalpa	560	Juticalpa
Kristel	1550	Juticalpa
La Super Grande	740	Juticalpa
La Voz de Olancho	710	Catacamas
La Voz de Patuca	1460	Catacamas
Majestad	770	Juticalpa
Musical	1040	Catacamas
Santa María de la Luz	1190	Gualaco

DEPARTAMENTO DE COPÁN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Cadena Occidental	940	Santa Rosa de Copán
Cultura de Copán	1480	La Entrada
Éxitos	1090	Santa Rosa de Copán
Honduras (r)	880	Santa Rosa de Copán
La Voz de Centroamérica (r)	640	Santa Rosa de Copán
La Voz de Copán	1450	Santa Rosa de Copán
H.R.N. (r)	670	Santa Rosa de Copán
La Voz de Occidente	700	Santa Rosa de Copán
Manantial	550	Santa Rosa de Copán
Maya	1210	La Entrada
Santa Rosa	1300	Santa Rosa de Copán
Sultana	820	Santa Rosa de Copán
Copán Galel	760	La Entrada

DEPARTAMENTO DE SANTA BÁRBARA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Actualidad	1420	Trinidad
Continente	1360	Trinidad
La Voz del Junco	1000	Santa Bárbara
Luz y Vida	1600	San Luis
Minería	1060	El Mochito
Ondas del Ulúa	1120	Santa Bárbara
Ondas del Ulúa	1150	Santa Bárbara
Relámpago	790	Santa Bárbara
Santa Bárbara	1029	Santa Bárbara
Santa Bárbara Estereo	1180	Santa Bárbara

DEPARTAMENTO DE OCOTEPEQUE

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Emanuel	1510	Nueva Ocotepeque
Señorial	1240	Ocotepeque
Ticante	1030	Ocotepeque

DEPARTAMENTO DE CHOLUTECA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	630	Choluteca
Atenea	1170	"
Choluteca	1290	"
Circuito Radio Centro	900	"
Ferguson	960	"
H.R.N. (r)	690	"
Meridiano	1080	"
Sur	1110	"
Valle	---	"
Victoria	1500	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE VALLE

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Henecán	1350	San Lorenzo
La Voz del Pacífico	1410	San Lorenzo
Nacaome	1200	Nacaome

DEPARTAMENTO DE EL PARAÍSO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Cadena de Guaymuras	1070	El Paraíso
Danlí	1370	Danlí
Honduras (r)	890	El Paraíso
Latina	1310	Danlí
Oriental	1130	Danlí
Paraíso	1160	El Paraíso
Providencia	1520	Danlí
Sistema Popular	950	Danlí
Sonora	1270	Danlí

DEPARTAMENTO DE ATLÁNTIDA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Bahía	1320	La Ceiba
América (r)	630	"
Caribe	720	"
Ceiba	570	"
Centro	860	"
Centro (r)	900	"
El Patio	1350	"
Hits	1170	"
Honduras (r)	870	"
La Voz de Atlántida	1410	"
La Voz de Centroamérica (r)	600	"
H.R.N. (r)	660	"
Luz y Verdad	1470	"
Michelle	1020	"
2060	1260	"
Miramar	1080	Tela
Palmeras	1140	La Ceiba
San Isidro	1440	La Ceiba

DEPARTAMENTO DE GRACIAS A DIOS

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
La Voz de la Mosquitia	750	Puerto Lempira
Honduras (r)	870	"
Sani Radio	4755	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE LEMPIRA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Ecos del Celaque	1270	Gracias

DEPARTAMENTO DE ISLAS DE LA BAHÍA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Bay Island Christian	1290	Roatán
Impacto	1200	Roatán

DEPARTAMENTO DE INTIBUCÁ

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Esperanza	1100	La Esperanza
Intibucá	740	"
Omega	1490	"

Listado de las emisoras en "FM"

DEPARTAMENTO DE FRANCISCO MORAZÁN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Aeropuerto	88.3	Tegucigalpa
América	94.7	"
Centro	92.9	"
Centro	102.5	"
Comayagüela	91.1	"
Digital FM Estereo	95.3	"
Estereo Amor	104.9	"
Estereo Eco	94.1	"
Éxitos	102.5	"
Éxitos	90.5	"
Estereo Luz	103.7	"
Fiesta	91.7	"
Honduras	101.3	"
La Voz de Centroamérica (r)	106.7	"
H.R.N.	92.9	"
La Voz de la Amistad	89.3	"
Linda	98.9	"
Mágica	96.5	"
Norte (r)	101.5	"
Reloj	88.7	"
Satélite	101.9	"
Saturno	89.9	"
Sonorama	96.5	"
Estereo Mil	106.1	"
Super 100 Estereo	100.1	"
Tegucigalpa	93.5	"
Tegucigalpa	107.9	"
Televisión	101.9	"
Tic Tac	97.1	"
Titanea	---	"
Unión radio	100.7	"
W 107 Energía Estereo	107.3	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE COLÓN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Trujillo	94.5	Trujillo

DEPARTAMENTO DE COMAYAGUA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Cadena Radial Impacto	93.9	Comayagua
Centro Radial Hondureño	96.3	Siguatopeque
Corporación	99.9	Comayagua
Estereo Punto	104.1	Comayagua
Honduras (r)	101.1	Comayagua
Metrópolis	97.5	Comayagua
Pinares	90.9	Siguatopeque
Sensación	91.5	Siguatopeque

DEPARTAMENTO DE OLANCHO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Constelación	102.1	Juticalpa
Diana	96.1	Juticalpa
Excelsior	96.7	Olancho
Honduras (r)	100.3	Juticalpa
Juticalpa	97.9	Juticalpa
La Voz de Olancho	91.9	Catacamas
La Voz de Sta. María de Luz	88.9	Sn. Fco. La Paz
Majestad	106.3	Juticalpa
ONE	103.9	Juticalpa
Estereo Hit	90.1	Catacamas

DEPARTAMENTO DE COPÁN

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	99.3	Sta. Rosa de Copan
Betel	91.5	"
Honduras (r)	100.5	"
La Voz de Occidente	92.5	"
Santa Rosa	94.5	"
Estereo Trópico	104.1	"
Sultana	90.3	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE CORTÉS

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
88 Estereo	88.3	San Pedro Sula
Alfa Estereo	93.1	"
América (r)	94.9	"
América (r)	99.1	"
Cortés	105.7	Puerto Cortés
Cristal	89.1	Puerto Cortés
ECO	105.7	San Pedro Sula
Estereo Centro	91.3	"
Estereo Color	93.7	"
Estereo Iris	103.9	"
Estereo Sula	100.3	"
Estrella de Oro	97.3	"
Éxitos	105.3	"
Fabulosa	102.1	"
Fama	97.9	"
Futura Estereo Juvenil	100.9	"
Honduras (r)	94.3	"
Honduras (r)	101.5	"
La Voz de Centroamérica	106.9	"
La Voz de Centroamérica	89.5	"
La Voz de Centroamérica	105.1	"
H.R.N. (r)	95.5	"
La Voz del Atlántico	104.5	Puerto Cortés
Lazzer	88.3	Puerto Cortés
Monumental	98.5	San Pedro Sula
Mundo	90.7	"
Música Ambiental	102.7	"
Norte	107.5	"
Rumbo	168.0	"
San Pedro	88.9	"
Saturno	93.1	"
Estereo Rey	96.7	"
Tiempo	99.7	"
La Voz de la Costa Internacional	91.9	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE VALLE

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Estereo Leed	105.7	San Lorenzo

DEPARTAMENTO DE EL PARAÍSO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Danlí	97.1	Danlí
Estereo Capri	91.5	Danlí
Guaymuras	102.9	El Paraíso
Honduras (r)	100.5	Danlí
Providencia	104.7	Danlí
Radio Sistema Popular	98.1	Danlí
Sonora	98.7	Danlí

DEPARTAMENTO DE GRACIAS A DIOS

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Honduras (r)	100.7	Puerto Lempira
La Voz de la Mosquitia	750.0	Gracias a Dios

DEPARTAMENTO DE ATLÁNTIDA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	99.3	La Ceiba
Caribe	98.7	"
Ceiba	99.9	"
Circuito Radio Centro	93.3	"
Estereo Sol	103.5	"
Honduras (r)	100.5	"
La Voz de Atlántida	101.7	"
Miramar	96.3	Tela
Radio Bahía	102.3	La Ceiba
San Isidro	105.3	"
Super Estereo 97.5	97.5	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE YORO

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
América (r)	94.7	Olanchito
América (r)	98.9	"
Estación EQUIS	104.3	"
Honduras (r)	100.7	"
La Primerísima	105.5	"
LUX	88.7	"
Olanchito	92.9	"
Ranchera	89.9	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE SANTA BÁRBARA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Gémenis	93.3	Santa Bárbara
Las Vegas FM Estereo	106.5	Las Vegas
Ondas del Ulúa	98.1	Santa Bárbara
Relámpago	90.9	"
Sta. Bárbara Estereo	102.9	"
Venus	89.7	"

DEPARTAMENTO DE OCOTEPEQUE

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
La Voz de la Frontera	970.0	Ocotepeque

DEPARTAMENTO DE CHOLUTECA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Atenea	97.9	Choluteca
Estereo Sur	100.3	Choluteca
Estereo Vida	96.1	Choluteca
Ferguson	103.3	Choluteca
Honduras (r)	100.9	Choluteca
Samaritano	91.9	Sn. M. de Colón
Estereo Contacto	104.4	Choluteca
Estereo F	89.5	Choluteca
Valle	90.7	Choluteca

DEPARTAMENTO DE LEMPIRA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Congolón	102.3	Gracias
Ecos del Celaque	101.7	Gracias

DEPARTAMENTO DE ISLAS DE LA BAHÍA

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
Bay Island Christian Net	93.9	Roatán

DEPARTAMENTO DE INTIBUCÁ

Nombre de la emisora	Frecuencia	Ciudad
La Voz del Buen Pastor	102.9	La Esperanza

CANALES DE TELEVISIÓN EN HONDURAS

Ciudad	Canal
Tegucigalpa	3
Tegucigalpa	5
Tegucigalpa	7
Tegucigalpa	9
Tegucigalpa	21
Tegucigalpa	57
San Pedro Sula	4 repetidor 7
San Pedro Sula	7 repetidor 3
San Pedro Sula	5
San Pedro Sula	9
San Pedro Sula	21

Source: Moncada 1994